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ABSTRACT

Every 2 or 3 years, the City of Gering, Nebraska surveys the local community to get citizens' reactions regarding utility rates, public services, professional services, local amenities, housing, business climate, and community improvements. In November 1992, questionnaires were mailed to 3,065 residents, asking them to rate elements of the city on a scale of 1 (unsatisfied) to 4 (highly satisfied). An analysis of the surveys conducted by Western Nebraska Community College and based on 582 completed forms, indicated the following: (1) the average respondent was a married male Caucasian who had lived in Gering for 22 years; (2) respondents were satisfied or highly satisfied with respect to public services, except for water quality which received a mean rating of 2.84; (3) all traffic services and maintenance fell under the satisfied rating of 3, with police receiving a mean rating of 2.88, street lighting 2.85, street maintenance 2.58, and snow removal 2.22; (4) the only community service that received ratings above the satisfied level was the library; (5) with respect to job opportunities for all age groups, 21% to 25% were unsatisfied, while another 40% thought they could be improved; (6) 87% rated Gering as a satisfactory place to live; (7) aspects that respondents liked most about Gering were the small community atmosphere, friendly people, and the community services and facilities; and (8) elements liked least about Gering were entertainment opportunities, high taxes, the community environment, and street maintenance. The survey instrument and data tables are appended. (KP)

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Analysis of
GERING 1992-93 COMMUNITY ATTITUDE SURVEY



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City of Gering, Nebraska

1025 "P" Street - P.O. Box 687
Gering, Nebraska 69341
(308) 436-5096
FAX: (308) 436-6899

PREFACE

This survey was conducted by the City of Gering with cooperation from Western Nebraska Community College (WNCC). The Office of Institutional Research at WNCC compiled the data and the final report. The City of Gering appreciates the dedication and professionalism of WNCC Research Analyst, Chanida Katkanant, and staff members Barbara Grassmick and Linda Williams.

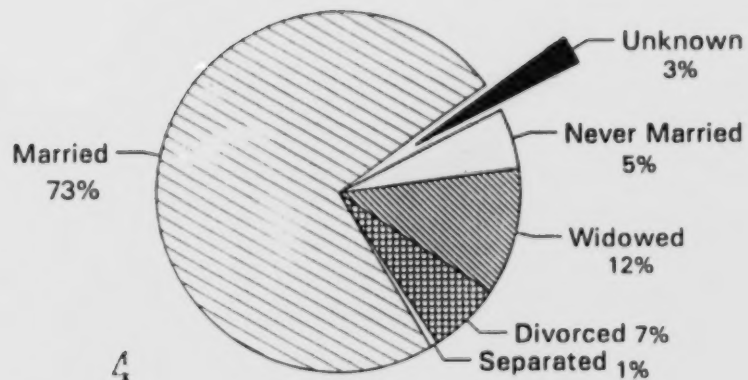
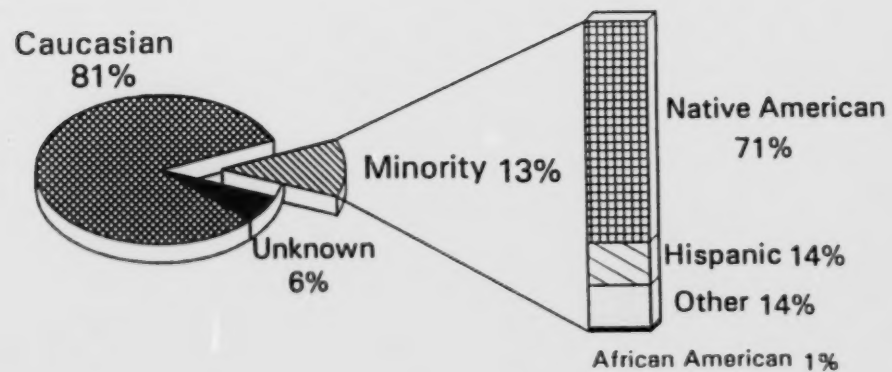
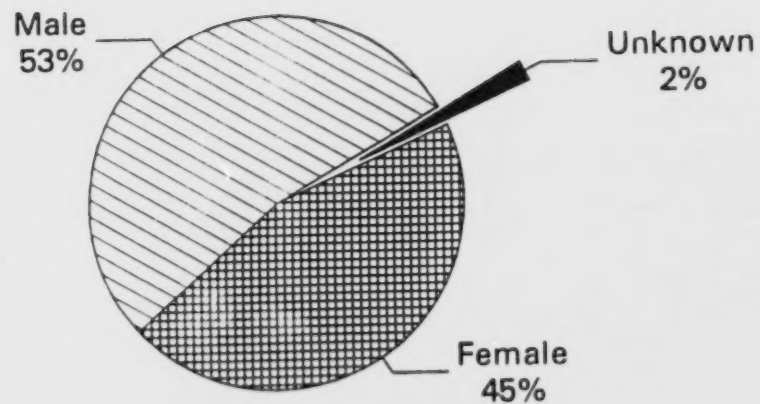
The survey is done approximately every two or three years to gather public comments on the many services the City of Gering offers. The purpose of this survey was to get a candid reaction from the citizens of Gering regarding utility rates, public services, professional services, local amenities, housing, business climate and community improvements.

The survey results are available to any agencies who may benefit from the findings. This report is intended to be used as a tool in identifying strengths and weaknesses in our community, and to assist in developing programs to improve the quality of life in the City of Gering.

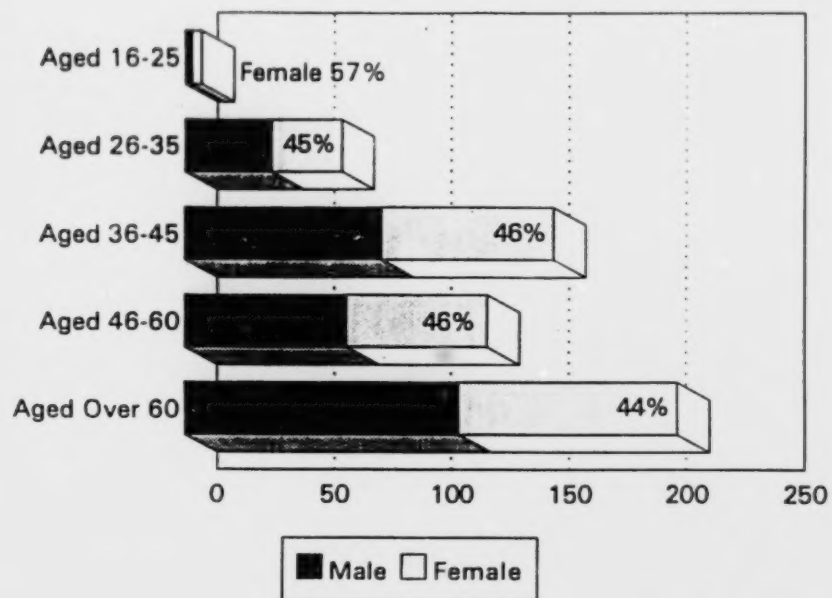
This survey and the results would not have been possible without the cooperation of the Gering citizens who responded to the survey. The City of Gering would like to thank them for their time and effort. Their candid responses were highly appreciated.

*Pamela K. Richter
City Clerk*

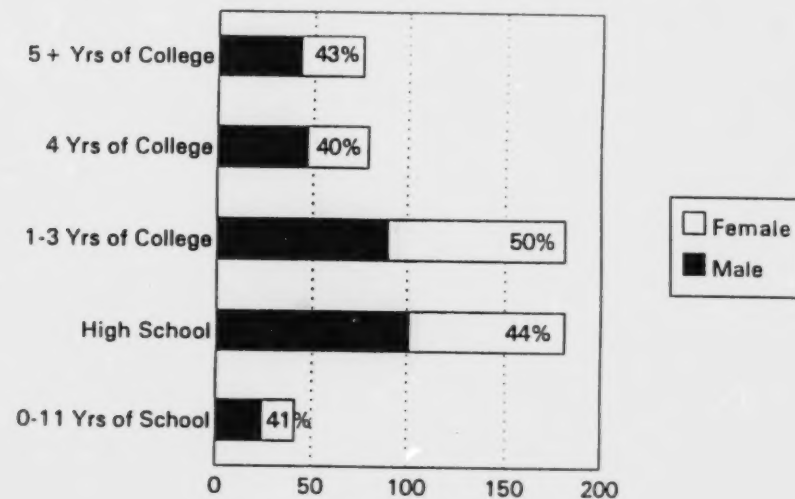
Respondent Profile of Gender, Marital Status, and Ethnicity



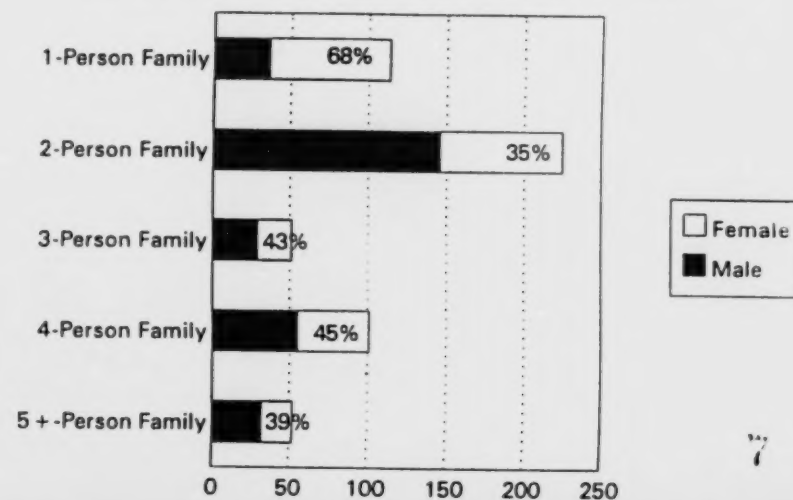
Respondents by Age Group and Gender



Respondents by Education Level and Gender



Respondents by Family Size and Gender



Recommendations of the Study

One of the major concerns in conducting this survey study was the length of the questionnaire survey. The City of Gering made its best effort to design the content and number of questions so that it would not become too overwhelming and/or take too much valuable time of its residents. With this limitation some of the issues asked in the survey appeared to be very general or in a broad sense. While the responses to these issues did generate an informative reference, more specific and further investigation should be pursued as to WHY and HOW. For example, quite a few respondents in this study seemed to be dissatisfied with industrial planning and development programs. Such results may not be quite meaningful and may be discouraging to industrial planning personnel. It is recommended that the City share the results of this study to related personnel and encourage them to research the issue further to obtain results that would be practical for actual operation. The method used for follow-up study may not necessarily be a time-consuming questionnaire survey. Structured phone interview or focus group methods could be more effective options provided that well-represented groups are selected.

Analysis of Gering 1992-93 Community Attitude Survey

Summary

The sample frame for this study was chosen from the City of Gering's utility billing list plus lists of multiple-family complexes. Three thousand sixty-five questionnaire surveys were then mailed to residents in the third week of November, 1992. The 582 returned surveys (19% response rate) were analyzed and the findings from the analyses are reported as follows.

■ Resident Profile

- ▶ More than half of the respondents in this study (53%) are male.
- ▶ The highest percentage of respondents (31%) have either a high school education or 1-3 years of college.
- ▶ Caucasians represent 81%, Native Americans 9%, and Hispanics 2% of the respondents in this study.
- ▶ Almost three-fourths of the respondents are married, 12% are widowed, 6% are divorced and 5% have never been married.
- ▶ The average length of residence in Gering is 22 years, with a minimum length of 2 months and a maximum length of 83 years.
- ▶ The majority of respondents (39%) are in two-person families. Most of the respondents who have additional members in their families reported earning incomes above the median range.

■ Public Services/Facilities

- ▶ Of the five utilities surveyed in this study, Natural Gas was cited as having the highest rates and sewer as having the lowest rates.
- ▶ Public services such as Water Availability, Fire Protection, Natural Gas, Electrical, and Telephone were perceived as ranging from the Satisfied to the Highly Satisfied level. Water Quality was the only public service that was rated below the Satisfied level.
- ▶ Regarding sanitation services, respondents appeared to be quite satisfied with Garbage Collection and Sewage Treatment. Storm Water Drainage was perceived as needing some improvement.
- ▶ All traffic services/maintenance surveyed in this study were rated as being below the Satisfied level. Snow Removal appeared to be the least favorably rated among the other services in this category.
- ▶ In terms of community facilities, a majority of respondents (85%) appeared to be quite satisfied or very pleased with the Library. Other facilities such as Care Facilities for Seniors and Daycare Facilities for Children obtained a rating scale below the Satisfied level. Approximately one-third of the respondents voiced concerns with Cultural Opportunities.

(continued -->)

Summary (continued)

- ▶ Respondents in this study seemed to be well satisfied with all recreational facilities provided in the community except the Tennis Courts. The rating scale for the Tennis Courts happened to fall a little bit below the Satisfied level.
 - ▶ All entertainment facilities surveyed in this study were perceived as being well below the Satisfied level. Motel availability/quality was rated the least satisfactory of these facilities. Regarding shopping facilities, it is apparent that respondents are more concerned with the number of shopping facilities than with quality itself.
- **Community/Economic Planning & Development**
- ▶ Respondents' rating on the adequacy of Low-Income Housing and Housing for the Elderly falls about halfway between the Needs Improvement and Satisfied scales. Adequate Rental Housing was perceived as being well below the Satisfied level and needing improvement.
 - ▶ Job Opportunities for all age groups were rated as needing improvement. Respondents seem to have the most concerns with Job Opportunities for ages 46 and over. This finding may be a result of the fact that the majority of respondents represented in this study are in this age group.
 - ▶ Half of the respondents in this study appear to have concerns with the Community/Economic Development Programs and believe some improvements are needed for those programs.
 - ▶ Apparently, opinions on air service are divided. Among those respondents who rated this service, half of them are quite content with it while the other half were less optimistic.
- **Respondents' Attitudes toward Gering as a Place to Live**
- ▶ A majority of the respondents (87%) rated Gering, as a place to live, as being at the Satisfied or Highly Satisfied level. The overall quality of life in Gering was also perceived in the Satisfied and Highly Satisfied levels by the majority of respondents (83%).
 - ▶ Well over half of the respondents (67%) appear to be pleased with the general appearance and attractiveness of their community. The major concerns appear to be with City government operations, as voiced by 45% of the respondents.

(continued -->)

Summary (continued)

recycled
2.

■ Respondents Opinions on Special Programs/Services

- ▶ More than half of the respondents (56%) did not recycle their yard waste. Of 41% who used, 53% used mulching mowers, approximately three out of ten used the composting method and the rest of them employed a combination of both.
- ▶ Well over half of respondents surveyed in this study would support and use the recycling program that is available.
- ▶ The majority of respondents reported their water pressure as being regular, one-third of them have concerns of it being high. A small percentage reported their water pressure as being low.
- ▶ Of those 27% of respondents who reported having requested Fire Department Emergency Medical Services, all of them but one resident received a good service.

■ Best Services Provided by the City to its Residents

- ▶ Electrical Service was ranked as the best service in town by almost a quarter of the respondents (24%).
- ▶ Parks and Recreational Facilities, and Water, were ranked as second best by approximately the same percentage of respondents (14-15%). Sanitation was also ranked as the second-best service by 10% of the respondents.
- ▶ The third ranking of the best services cited by 10% of the respondents included Fire Protection, Parks and Recreation, and the Library.

■ Worst Services Provided by the City to its Residents

- ▶ Administration was ranked as being the worst service provided to the residents of Gering, followed by Street Maintenance. A small number of respondents (6%) also cited Tourism and the Landfill.

■ Respondents' Attitudes Toward and Opinions about Living in Gering

- ▶ The three things that respondents like MOST about living in Gering were identified in the study as:

- one space
- ⊙ small community atmosphere,
 - ⊙ friendly people (neighborhood), and
 - ⊙ community services/facilities.

(continued -->)

Summary (continued)

- ▶ The three things the respondents like LEAST about living in Gering were cited as :
 - ⊗ entertainment opportunities,
 - ⊗ community environment, and
 - ⊗ street maintenance.
- ▶ The three major problems that Gering may face within the next five years were pointed out by the majority of respondents as follows:
 1. Civic Center Issue
 2. Increasing Taxes
 3. Job Opportunities and Economic Planning and Development

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Analysis of Gering 1992-93 Community Attitude Survey

Purpose

The purposes of conducting this attitude survey were threefold:

1. *To identify the strengths and weaknesses of services and facilities provided to residents by the City of Gering.*
2. *To assess respondents' perceptions of and attitudes toward their community in terms of quality of life, housing, job opportunities, community & economic planning and development programs.*
3. *To obtain respondents' points of view about what they like the MOST and the LEAST in their community, as well as what concerns or problems they perceive the community may encounter in the near future.*

The analysis and results of this study will benefit the City of Gering in several aspects. Statistical data collected in this study may be used as resource information in developing grant proposals in needed areas. The respondents' assessment of City services, facilities and operations will serve as guidelines to improve and/or develop city services to better serve the community. Concerns and problems cited by the respondents will be used as references for city administrators in designing and/or implementing future programs/services to meet the needs and expectations of its residents.

Procedure

The attitude survey used in this study (See Appendix A) contains 59 questions. Most of the questions (79%) asked respondents to rate their satisfaction on a four-choice scale: Unsatisfied, Needs Improvement, Satisfied and Highly Satisfied. This rating scale is assumed to be a continuous measure ranging from 1 (Unsatisfied) to 4 (Highly Satisfied), with a separate measure option of NO OPINION. A few questions were YES-NO and multiple choice formats, and another three questions were open-ended. The last section of the survey asked about demographic data of respondents.

The sample frame in this study was chosen from the utility billing list plus lists of multiple family complexes, such as Northfield Villa and large apartment complexes. Three thousand sixty-five surveys were then mailed to those residents on the third week of November, 1992. The residents were asked to return the questionnaire survey either with the utility payment or mail it back separately. Self-addressed, stamped return envelopes were not provided in this study. The 582 returned surveys (19% return rate) were analyzed and the findings are presented in this report.

It should be pointed out, based on the sampling method used, that the respondents in this study may not well represent the whole population of the City of Gering. Follow-up of nonrespondents was not conducted in this study. The fact that a self-addressed, stamped envelope was not provided could have excluded a number of respondents who otherwise might have participated in the study.

Data Analysis

Data analysis used in this study was mainly descriptive and frequency analysis. Correlation analysis was also employed to investigate the relationship of some particular variables.

The rating scale of satisfaction (scale of 1 to 4) used in most of the questionnaires in the survey was analyzed using two approaches: continuous and categorical. The continuous measure approach generated the mean scale rating value which serves as an indicator of where the total sample's rating falls. Such a result is useful in terms of comparison among several items. The categorical measure approach or frequency analysis produced a tabulation table which illustrated how many respondents in the sample selected each rating scale (1 to 4). Both approaches apparently provided similar results but in different forms. It is hoped that by presenting the results using both continuous and categorical measure approaches, the interpretation of the results will be greatly enhanced.

Findings

The results and findings from the analysis are presented in 8 sections as follows:

1. Respondent Profile
 - 1.1 Age Group
 - 1.2 Education
 - 1.3 Ethnicity
 - 1.4 Marital Status
 - 1.5 Family Size and Income
 - 1.6 Length of Residence in Gering

2. Respondent Perception of Public Services/Facilities
 - 2.1 Utility Rates
 - 2.2 Public Services
 - 2.3 Sanitary Services
 - 2.4 Traffic Services/Maintenance
3. Respondent Perception of Public Facilities
 - 3.1 Community Facilities
 - 3.2 Recreational Facilities
 - 3.3 Entertainment Facilities
4. Respondent Perception of Community/Economic Planning & Development
 - 4.1 Adequacy of Housing
 - 4.2 Job Opportunities
 - 4.3 Community/Economic Planning & Development
5. Respondent Perception of Gering as a Place to Live
6. Respondent Opinions on Specific Programs/Services
7. Respondent Perception of the Best and the Worst Services the City Provided to Its Residents
 - 7.1 The Best Services the City Provided to Its Residents
 - 7.2 The Worst Services the City Provided to Its Residents
8. Respondents' Attitudes Toward Living in Gering
 - 8.1 Three Things Respondents Like MOST About Living in Gering
 - 8.2 Three Things Respondents Like LEAST About Living in Gering
 - 8.3 Three Biggest Problems that Gering May Face Within the Next Five Years

Each section of the report is composed of narrative descriptions, figures, and data summary tables. Data analysis summaries for some sections may found in the Appendices. A few graphical illustrations are also presented for a more conceptualized understanding of the comparative data. Different tones of shading are used throughout the report to highlight the significant part of the data or the largest percentage among each category. Since quite a few respondents did not answer all the questions, a response rate (RR) is reported along with each of the questions. The response rate was calculated based on the total of 582 returned surveys.

Section 1

Respondent Profile

- 1.1 Age Group*
- 1.2 Education*
- 1.3 Ethnicity*
- 1.4 Marital Status*
- 1.5 Family Size and Income*
- 1.6 Length of Residence in Gering*

Table 1
Respondent Profile

■ Gender	Count (Percentage)
▶ Male	311 (53%)
▶ Female	261 (45%)
▶ No response	10 (2%)

■ Age Group	
▶ Aged 16-25 yrs	8 (1%)
▶ Aged 26-35 yrs	67 (12%)
▶ Aged 36-45 yrs	157 (27%)
▶ Aged 46-60 yrs	130 (22%)
▶ Aged Over 60 yrs	214 (37%)
▶ Unknown	6 (1%)

■ Educational Level	
▶ 0-11 yrs of School	41 (7%)
▶ High School	183 (31%)
▶ 1-3 yrs of College	183 (31%)
▶ 4 yrs of College	80 (14%)
▶ More than 5 yrs of College	77 (13%)
▶ No Response	18 (3%)

Table 1 (Continued)

■ Ethnicity	Count (Percentage)
▶ Caucasian	474 (81%)
▶ Native American	52 (9%)
▶ Hispanic	10 (2%)
▶ African American	1 (--)
▶ Other	5 (2%)
▶ No Response	35 (6%)

■ Marital Status

▶ Married	427 (73%)
▶ Divorced	38 (6%)
▶ Widowed	67 (12%)
▶ Separated	4 (1%)
▶ Never Married	31 (5%)
▶ No Response	15 (3%)

■ Residence Lengths

▶ Less than 1 yr	19 (3%)
▶ 1-3 yrs	38 (7%)
▶ 3+ to 5 yrs	44 (8%)
▶ 5+ to 10 yrs	66 (11%)
▶ 10+ to 20 yrs	143 (25%)
▶ 20+ to 30 yrs	88 (15%)
▶ More than 30 yrs	152 (26%)
▶ No Response	32 (5%)

► 1.4 Marital Status

Regarding Marital Status (See Table 1), almost three-fourths are married, 12% are widowed, 6% are divorced, and only 1% identified themselves as being separated. About 5% of respondents have never married and 3% chose not to disclose their marital status.

It is interesting to find out that quite a large number of respondents (45%) did not wish to identify themselves regarding whether they are a single parent or not. Nevertheless, there are only 7% who are single parents in this sample of respondents. Almost half (49%) identified themselves as being non-single parents.

Further analysis focused on the single parent group (Table 2) showed that more than half of them (62%) are females. Well over half of the single parents, regardless of their gender, have had at least one to three years of college. There appeared to be no young single parents (ages 16-25 years) reported in this study.

As illustrated in Table 2, the majority of single parents identified in this study (81%) are aged over 36 and about 38% of them reported living by themselves (one-person family size). Such results seemed to indicate that the respondents may not be quite clear about the term "single parent". The large number of non-responses (45%) to this question also seemed to support this speculation; hence, the analysis of single parents may not be quite valid and should be cautiously interpreted.

Table 2
Profile of Single Parent

	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>
► <i>Number of Single Parents</i>	14 (38%)	23 (62%)
► <i>Age</i>		
16-25 yrs	—	—
26-35 yrs	2 (14%)	4 (17%)
36-45 yrs	7 (50%)	6 (26%)
46-60 yrs	3 (21%)	6 (26%)
over 60 yrs	2 (14%)	7 (30%)
► <i>Educational Level</i>		
0-11 yrs of School	2 (14%)	2 (9%)
High School	3 (21%)	6 (26%)
1-3 yrs College	4 (29%)	12 (52%)
4 yrs College	2 (14%)	3 (13%)
More than 5 yrs College	3 (21%)	—
► <i>Family Size</i>		
1-person family	6 (43%)	8 (35%)
2-person family	4 (29%)	6 (26%)
3-person family	1 (7%)	5 (22%)
3+ person family	3 (21%)	4 (17%)

► 1.5 Family Size and Income

The frequency analysis of respondents' family size and their income level is presented in Table 3. The average family size of Gering residents in the survey study is two to three persons. The majority of respondents (39%) are in two-person families and approximately one-fifth live by themselves. About 9% of them have two additional family members, 17% have three additional family members. The rest of the respondents (10%) belong to a family of five or more.

The analysis of family size in relation to ethnicity did not reflect any pattern that minority groups tended to have a larger family size than the Caucasian. Among the Native Americans, the majority of them (42%) are two-person families and only 15% of them have three or more additional members in their families. It is noted that four out of ten Hispanics represented in this study have four or more additional members in their family. However, the sample of Hispanics was too small to yield any valid conclusion.

In terms of income, the respondents were asked to check whether the total income of all members of their family was less than the median range income set for each family size or not (See Table 3). It appeared that well over half of the respondents reported having their total income above median range of their family size except those (60-81%) who are one-person families and one eight-person family.

Among the respondents who reported having income above median range, those who are from four-person families represented the highest percentage (81%). Further analysis of these well-off respondents showed that more than half of them (54%) are male and the majority (59%) are aged between 36-45 years old. It is not surprising to find out that the majority of them are well-educated (See Figure 1).

Figure 1

Respondents of Four-Person Family Size Reporting Having Income Above Median Range (\$23,900) Broken Down by Education Level

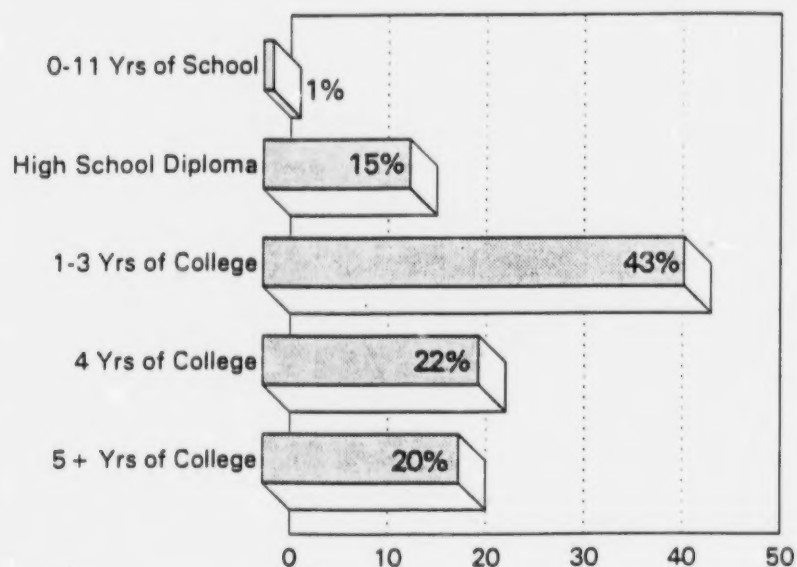


Table 3
Frequency Analysis on Respondents' Family Size
and Their Family Income

Family Size	Number of Responses (%)	Total Income of All Members Within Last 12 Months	Response to Income* Count (%)	
1-person family	115 (20%)	Less than \$16,750**	Yes	70 (61%)
			No	44 (38%)
2-person family	228 (39%)	Less than \$19,150	Yes	85 (37%)
			No	137 (60%)
3-person family	52 (9%)	Less than \$21,550	Yes	12 (23%)
			No	40 (77%)
4-person family	101 (17%)	Less than \$23,900	Yes	18 (18%)
			No	82 (81%)
5-person family	38 (7%)	Less than \$25,850	Yes	8 (21%)
			No	29 (76%)
6-person family	9 (2%)	Less than \$27,750	Yes	2 (22%)
			No	7 (78%)
7-person family	4 (1%)	Less than \$29,650	Yes	1 (25%)
			No	3 (75%)
8-person family	1 (-)	Less than \$31,550	Yes	1 (100%)
			No	- (-)

* Not all respondents answered this question.

** Income Range based on 80% of median income.

*shouldn't
No be shaded
is all but
1-person +
8 person*

More than half (61%) of those respondents who live by themselves earn income of less than median range. There was only one respondent who reported having seven or more additional members in the family and earning income below median range.

Further analysis of those one-person families with income below median range (70 out of 582 respondents) shows that 70% of them are females and well over half (66%) are aged over 60. More than half of them (56%) have a high school diploma or less. Analysis of the marital status shows that more than half of them (54%) are widowed, 14% are divorced, 19% have never been married, and the rest of them (9%) stayed married. These 9% of respondents who stayed married and live by themselves are all aged over 60.

► 1.6 *Length of Residency in Gering*

The average length of residence in Gering for the sample of respondents in this study was about 22 years, with minimum range of 2 months and maximum range of 83 years. The portion of Table 1 which illustrates the residence length is duplicated below for convenient reference. The majority of respondents in this study (77%) have resided in Gering more than 5 years. Approximately one-fourth of the residents have either resided in Gering for over 30 years or between 10-20 years. Only 3% of the respondents indicated that they have been here less than a year.

■ Residence Lengths

► Less than 1 yr	19 (3%)
► 1-3 yrs	38 (7%)
► 3+ to 5 yrs	44 (8%)
► 5+ to 10 yrs	66 (11%)
► 10+ to 20 yrs	143 (25%)
► 20+ to 30 yrs	88 (15%)
► More than 30 yrs	152 (26%)
► No Response	32 (5%)

Section 2

Respondent Perception of Public Services/Facilities

- 2.1 Utility Rates*
- 2.2 Public Services*
- 2.3 Sanitation Services*
- 2.4 Traffic Services/Maintenance*

SECTION 2

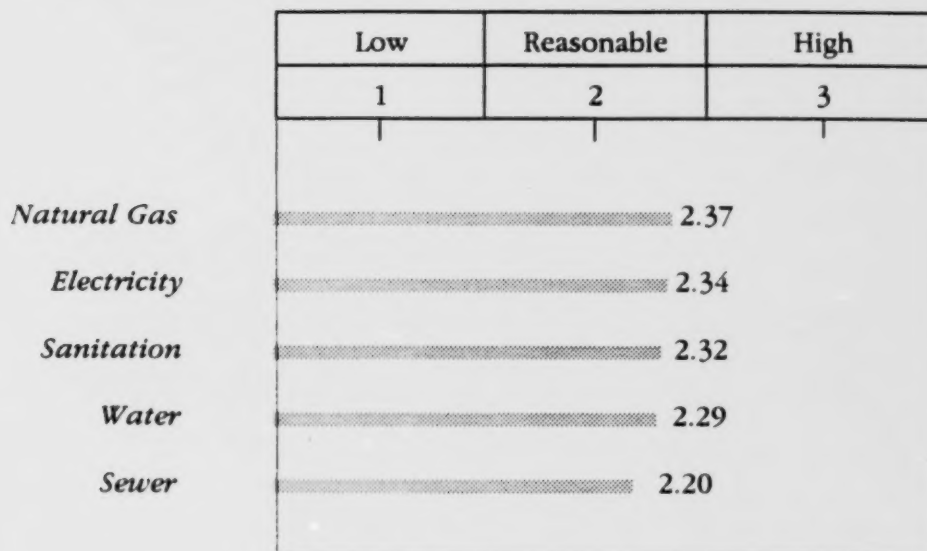
Respondent Perception of Public Services/Facilities

In this section, respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction with several public services, facilities and maintenance. The results of the analysis are presented in terms of narration, along with figures and tables. Figures usually illustrate the mean (average) scale rating for each item while tables present the frequency count and percentage of respondents who gave a rating score in each category. The shadowed cells in the table usually indicate the highest frequency count or percentage for the column in each category. The results of the analysis are as follows:

► *2.1 Utility Rates*

The respondents were asked to rate their perceptions on the rates charged for five utilities as being Low (1) or Reasonable (2) or High (3), with an additional option of No Opinion. The mean scale ratings (MSR), which ranged from 1 (Low) to 3 (High) for each type of utility, are illustrated in Figure 2. The frequency counts, along with percentages, are presented in Table 4.

Figure 2
Respondent Mean Scale Ratings on Five Utilities



The mean scale ratings on all five utilities fall between Reasonable (2) and High (3). Among the five utilities listed in this study, Natural Gas was perceived as being the highest charge (MSR = 2.37), Electricity as the second highest (MSR = 2.34), followed by Sanitation (MSR = 2.32) and Water (2.29). Respondents in this study rated Sewer (MSR = 2.20) as the lowest rate charged among other utilities.

Table 4
Frequency Analysis of Utility Services

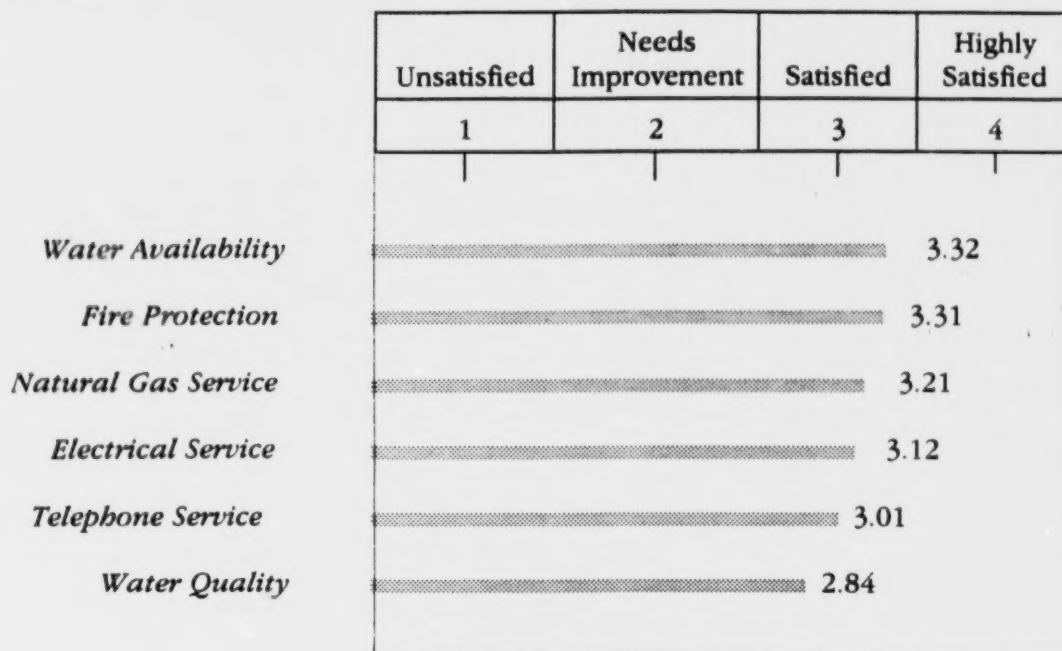
Utility Type	Respondent Rating - Count (Percentage)				Total Responses (RR)
	No Opinion	Low	Reasonable	High	
Electricity	5 (1%)	10 (2%)	351 (60%)	203 (35%)	569 (98%)
Water	15 (3%)	14 (2%)	361 (62%)	176 (30%)	566 (97%)
Sewer	17 (3%)	7 (1%)	423 (73%)	114 (20%)	561 (96%)
Sanitation	13 (2%)	7 (1%)	359 (62%)	183 (31%)	562 (96%)
Natural Gas	18 (3%)	6 (1%)	330 (57%)	207 (35%)	561 (96%)

The frequency analysis (see Table 4) shows that about 2-4% of respondents did not express their opinion on the utility rates. More than one-third of respondents (35%) rated Electricity and Natural Gas as being High. Well over half of the respondents appeared to be satisfied with the rates charged on all utilities. There were, however, very few (1-2%) who cited those rates as being Low.

► 2.2 Public Services

Respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction with several public services provided by the City of Gering. The rating scale, which is assumed to be a continuous measure, ranges from Unsatisfied (1) to Highly Satisfied (4), with the option of No Opinion. The response rate (RR) for this category is quite high (97-98%).

Figure 3
Mean Scale Ratings of Satisfaction on Six Public Services



All public services surveyed in this study except Water Quality (See Figure 3) were rated as being Satisfied to Highly Satisfied (MSR = 3.01 - 3.32). The mean scale rating on Water Quality falls a little bit below the satisfied level (MSR = 2.84). Among the six public services, Water Availability and Fire Protection were given the highest ratings (MSR = 3.32 and 3.31, respectively).

The frequency count and percentage of respondents who rated on each scale is presented in Table 5. More than one-third of the respondents (35%) are highly satisfied with the Water Availability and about one-third (33%) also expressed the same high satisfaction with Fire Protection Service. Natural Gas Service also was perceived as highly satisfied by almost one-fourth of the respondents. It appeared that the majority of the respondents (72-75%) are well satisfied with Telephone Services and Electrical. However, well over one-fourth of respondents (27%) perceived the Water Quality as being Unsatisfied and Needs Improvements.

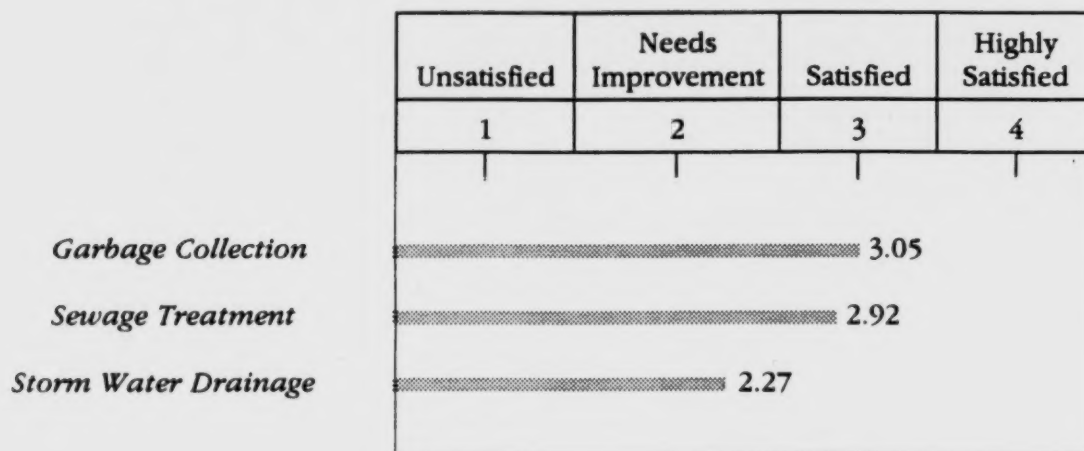
Table 5
Respondent Ratings of Public Services/Maintenance

Public Service/ Facility	Respondent Ratings: Count (percentage)					Total Responses (RR)
	Unsatisfied	Needs Improvement	Satisfied	Highly Satisfied	No Opinion	
Public Services						
Water Availability	3 (1%)	14 (2%)	343 (61%)	201 (35%)	7 (1%)	568 (98%)
Water Quality	38 (7%)	114 (20%)	308 (54%)	101 (18%)	8 (1%)	569 (98%)
Electrical Service	6 (1%)	24 (4%)	421 (75%)	103 (18%)	11 (2%)	565 (97%)
Natural Gas Service	4 (1%)	16 (3%)	389 (69%)	137 (24%)	18 (3%)	564 (97%)
Telephone Service	16 (3%)	50 (9%)	406 (72%)	89 (15%)	6 (1%)	567 (97%)
Fire Protection	3 (1%)	14 (2%)	332 (59%)	184 (33%)	30 (5%)	563 (97%)
Sanitary Services						
Sewage Treatment	17 (3%)	71 (13%)	358 (64%)	66 (12%)	44 (8%)	556 (96%)
Storm Water Drainage	104 (19%)	227 (40%)	189 (34%)	32 (5%)	10 (2%)	562 (97%)
Garbage Collection	12 (2%)	62 (11%)	378 (67%)	113 (20%)	2 (--)	567 (97%)
Traffic Services/ Maintenance						
Street Maintenance	58 (10%)	172 (30%)	285 (51%)	51 (9%)	1 (--)	567 (97%)
Traffic Signals & Signs	30 (5%)	119 (21%)	362 (64%)	50 (9%)	5 (1%)	566 (97%)
Street Lighting	25 (4%)	103 (18%)	372 (66%)	67 (12%)	1 (--)	568 (98%)
Police Traffic & Enforcement	29 (5%)	102 (18%)	334 (59%)	91 (16%)	10 (2%)	566 (97%)
Snow Removal	123 (22%)	214 (38%)	187 (33%)	30 (5%)	12 (2%)	566 (97%)

► 2.3 Sanitary Services

The mean scale ratings of Sanitary Services are illustrated in Figure 4 and frequency counts on each rating scale appear in Table 5.

Figure 4
Mean Scale Ratings on Sanitary Services



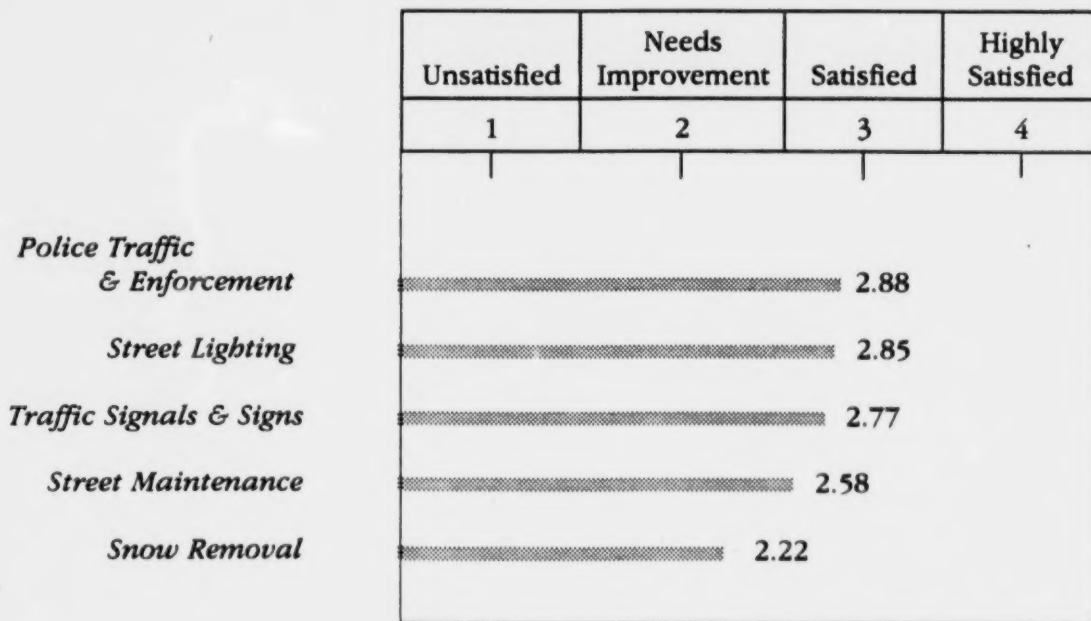
In general, the respondents represented in this study seemed to be quite satisfied with garbage collection (MSR = 3.05) and sewage treatment services (MSR = 2.92). As a matter of fact, one-fifth of respondents rated Garbage Collection as being highly satisfied and well over half of them (67%) expressed satisfaction. Over three-fourths of respondents have no complaints about sewage treatment as well. It is noted, however, that quite a few of respondents (8%) did not express their opinion on sewage treatment at all.

Storm Water Drainage was perceived as least satisfied among the Sanitary Services and may need some improvements (MSR = 2.27). Such concerns were voiced by 40% of the respondents and almost one-fifth (19%) of the other respondents are not satisfied with the service at all (Table 5).

► **2.4 Traffic Services/Maintenance**

All Traffic Services and Maintenance surveyed in this study received a rating scale below the satisfied level (MSR = 2.22 - 2.88). As illustrated in Figure 5, among the five Traffic Services, Police Traffic & Enforcement obtained the highest rating toward the satisfied level (MSR = 2.88) while the Snow Removal was rated as being the least satisfied (MSR = 2.22). Respondents in this study appeared to be in favor of Street Lighting Service more than Traffic Signals & Signs. The mean scale rating of Street Maintenance (MSR = 2.58) falls approximately halfway between Unsatisfied and Needs Improvement.

Figure 5
Mean Scale Ratings on Traffic Services/Maintenance



The frequency counts, along with percentage of respondents on each rating scale, are presented in Table 5. About 16% of respondents are highly satisfied with Police Traffic & Enforcement services and more than half of the other respondents express their satisfaction as well. There were, however, almost one-fifth (18%) of the respondents who perceived the service may need some improvement and about 5% were not satisfied at all.

Quite a few of the respondents (22-26%) were not in favor of services on Street Lighting and Traffic Signals & Signs. On the positive side, well over half of the other respondents expressed their satisfaction with Street Lighting and Traffic Signals & Signs and only 4-5% seemed to disapprove of these services.

A large number (40%) of the respondents seemed to believe that some improvements need to be made in keeping up the streets in Gering. Well over half of the respondents voiced the same concern on Snow Removal Services.

Section 3

Respondent Perception of Public Facilities

- 3.1 Community Facilities*
- 3.2 Recreational Facilities*
- 3.3 Entertainment Facilities*

SECTION 3

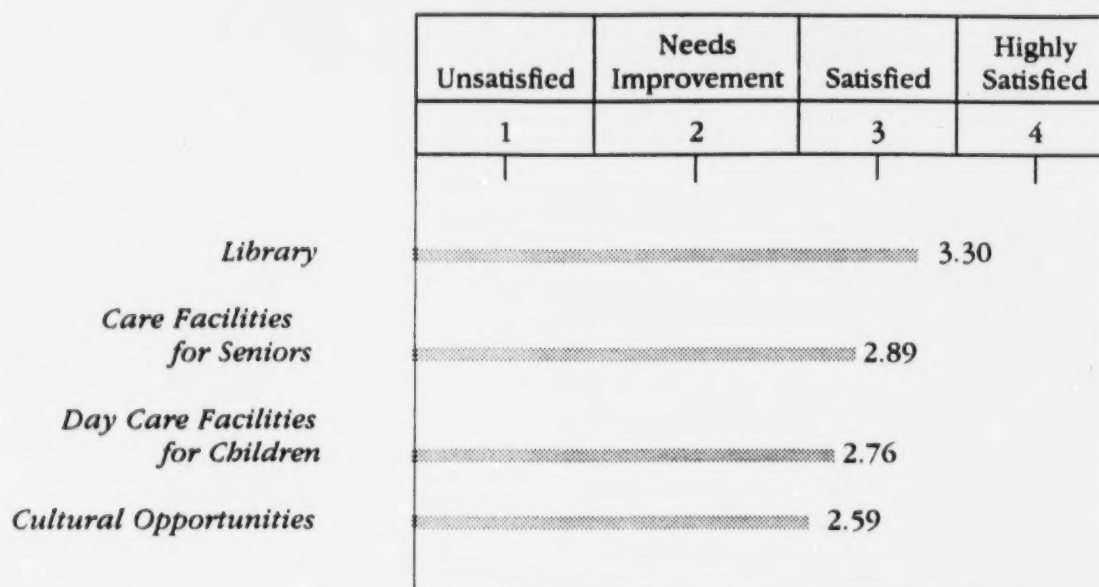
Respondent Perception of Public Facilities

Public Facilities surveyed in this study were classified into three categories: Community Facilities, Recreational Facilities and Entertainment Facilities. The respondents were asked to give their rating of satisfaction on these facilities. The rating scale used ranged from Unsatisfied (1) to Highly Satisfied (4), with an option of No Opinion. Since quite a few of the respondents in this study may have never used some facility, such as Day Care, Golf or Tennis Courts, the percentage of No Opinion was expectedly high.

► 3.1 *Community Facilities*

The only Community Facility (See Figure 6) that appeared to be providing services that are above the satisfied level was the Library (MSR = 3.30). The other Community Facilities, such as Care Facilities for Seniors and Children were rated below the satisfied level (MSR = 2.89 and 2.76, respectively). The facility for Cultural Opportunities (MSR = 2.59), was perceived as least favorable among other Community Facilities.

Figure 6
Mean Scale Ratings on Community Facilities



It is noted, however, that there was quite a large number of respondents who did not express an opinion on these services. More than one-fifth of the respondents (22%) had no opinion on facilities for Cultural Opportunities, more than one-fourth (27%) did not give any satisfaction rating on Care Facilities for Seniors, and almost half of them (49%) did not express their opinion on Day Care Facilities for Children.

The frequency counts on each rating for Community Facilities (Table 6) show that about one-third of all respondents were highly satisfied with the services provided by the Library and more than half of the other respondents appeared to be content with the facility as well.

Table 6
Respondent Ratings of Public Facilities Provided in the Community

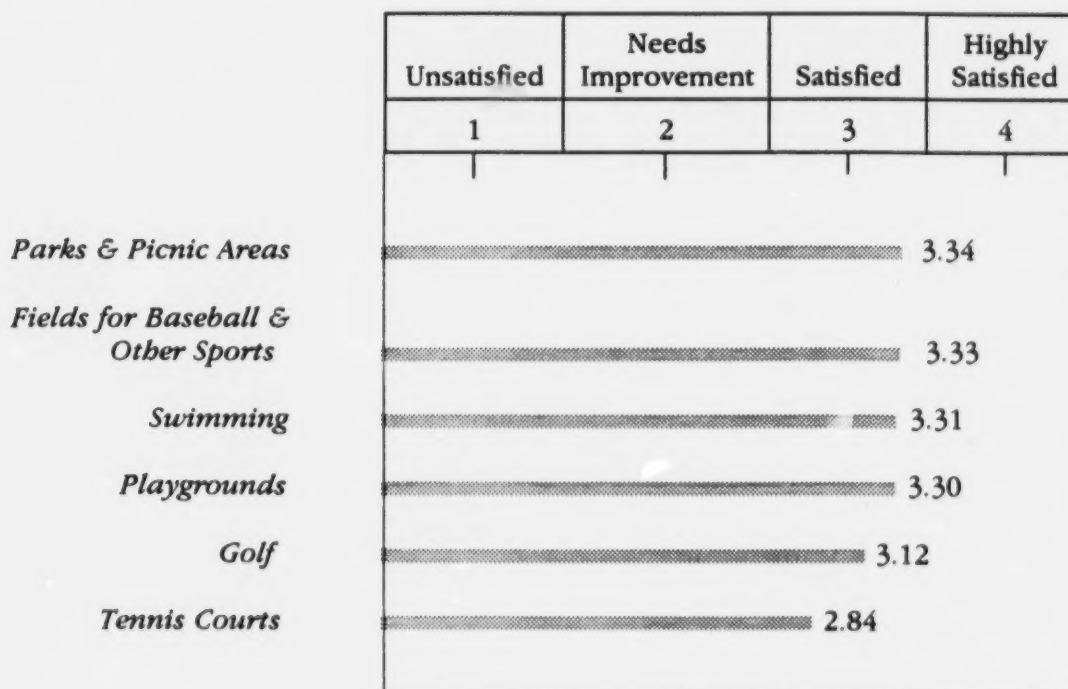
Public Facility	Respondent Ratings: Count (percentage)					Total Responses (RR)
	Unsatisfied	Needs Improvement	Satisfied	Highly Satisfied	No Opinion	
Community Facilities						
Library	6 (1%)	21 (4%)	296 (52%)	186 (33%)	56 (10%)	565 (97%)
Cultural Opportunities	32 (6%)	151 (27%)	212 (38%)	37 (7%)	121 (22%)	553 (95%)
Day Care Facilities for Children	10 (1%)	77 (14%)	161 (30%)	31 (6%)	264 (49%)	543 (93%)
Care Facilities for Seniors	13 (2%)	77 (14%)	260 (47%)	57 (10%)	149 (27%)	556 (96%)
Recreational Facilities						
Parks & Picnic Areas	8 (1%)	18 (3%)	305 (54%)	225 (40%)	11 (2%)	567 (97%)
Playgrounds	7 (1%)	18 (3%)	301 (54%)	182 (33%)	53 (9%)	561 (96%)
Fields for Baseball & Other Sports	11 (2%)	29 (5%)	251 (44%)	217 (38%)	59 (11%)	567 (97%)
Swimming	5 (1%)	17 (3%)	295 (52%)	179 (32%)	69 (12%)	565 (97%)
Golf	12 (2%)	42 (8%)	244 (44%)	114 (20%)	144 (26%)	556 (96%)
Tennis Courts	25 (5%)	72 (13%)	245 (44%)	58 (10%)	155 (28%)	555 (95%)
Entertainment Facilities						
Restaurant Availability/Quality	102 (18%)	273 (48%)	148 (26%)	34 (6%)	9 (2%)	566 (97%)
Motel Availability/Quality	135 (24%)	210 (37%)	138 (25%)	29 (5%)	50 (9%)	562 (97%)
Quality of Shopping Facilities	69 (12%)	203 (36%)	246 (44%)	41 (7%)	6 (1%)	565 (97%)
Number of Shopping Facilities	101 (18%)	269 (48%)	145 (26%)	34 (6%)	13 (2%)	562 (97%)

About 14% of the respondents seemed to believe that Day Care Facilities for Children, as well as Care Facilities for Seniors, need to be improved. Nevertheless, almost half of the respondents (47%) have no complaints about Care Facilities for Seniors and one-tenth of the other respondents did commend such facilities. Although more than one-fourth of the respondents (35%) seemed to have concerns with the facilities for Cultural Opportunities, there were quite a few other respondents (45%) who do not.

► 3.2 Recreational Facilities

Respondents in this study appeared to be well satisfied with all recreational facilities provided in the community except the Tennis Courts (See Figure 7). Tennis Courts was the only recreational facility that received a mean scale rating a little bit below the satisfied level (MSR = 2.84).

Figure 7
Mean Scale Ratings on Recreational Facilities



Recreational Facilities such as Parks & Picnic Areas and Facilities for Baseball & Other Sports obtained the highest ratings (MSR = 3.34 and 3.33, respectively), followed by Swimming and Playground Facilities (MSR = 3.31 and 3.30, respectively).

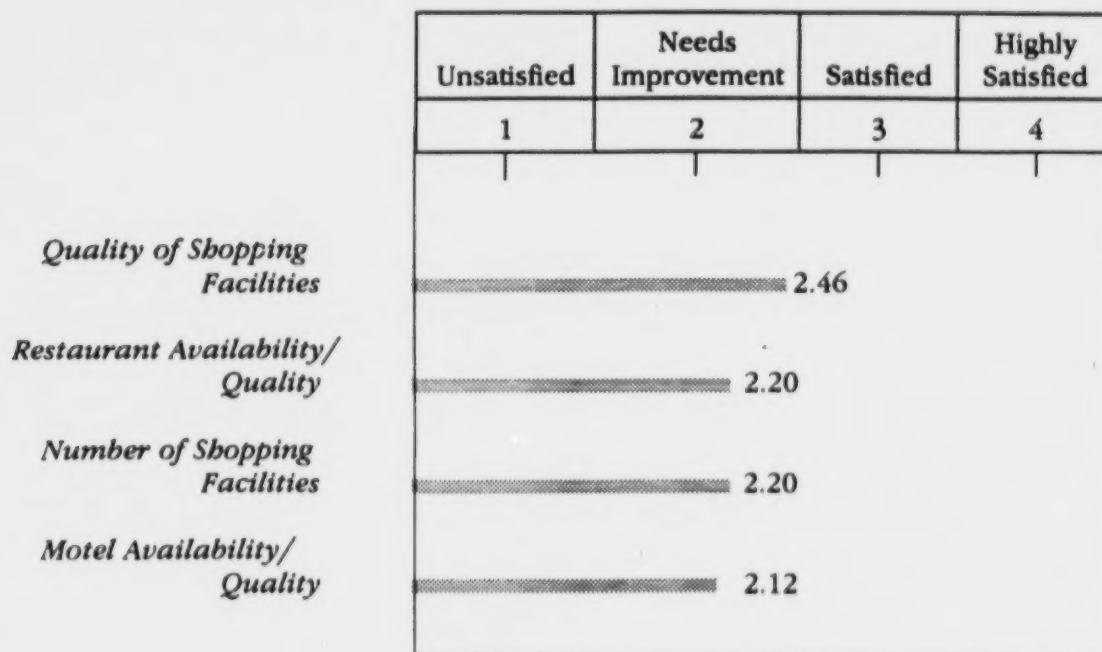
According to the mean scale rating for Parks & Picnic Areas (MSR = 3.34), it is not surprising to find out that almost all of the respondents who expressed their opinions (94%) were either very pleased or satisfied with the facility (See Table 6). Well over one-third of the respondents were highly content with facilities for Baseball & Other Sports. Playgrounds and Swimming facilities were also commended by about one-third of the respondents.

For those respondents who did use such facilities as Golf and Tennis Courts, in general, they were quite content with the facilities. About one-fifth of them were very satisfied with Golf as were the other 10% with the Tennis Courts. Nevertheless, there were quite a few of other respondents (18%) who were not quite satisfied and suggested some improvement for Tennis Courts.

► 3.3 Entertainment Facilities

The concerns, if any, that the City of Gering needs to take into consideration appear to be in the provision of entertainment facilities. The mean scale ratings for all entertainment facilities fall well below the satisfied level toward the needs improvement scale (Figure 8). Quality of Shopping Facilities (MSR = 2.46) was perceived to be better than any other Entertainment Facility.

Figure 8
Mean Scale Ratings on Entertainment Facilities



The mean scale ratings of all entertainment facilities falls well below the satisfied level. Quality of Shopping Facilities obtained the highest mean scale rating (MSR = 2.46), while Motel Availability/Quality was rated the least satisfied (MSR = 2.12) among other entertainment facilities.

Well over one-third of the respondents (37%) seemed to think that Motel Facilities need to be improved, while almost one-fourth of the others were not satisfied at all.

The majority of the respondents (48%) believe that Restaurant Availability/Quality needs to be improved while quite a few of them (18%) were not satisfied at all.

Regarding Shopping Facilities, it appeared that the respondents have more concern on the Quantity (Number of Shopping Facilities) than the Quality itself. As shown in Table 6, well over half of the respondents (66%) voiced concerns on the Number of Shopping Facilities, while a lesser percentage of respondents (48%) shared the same perception on the Quality of Shopping Facilities. As a matter of fact, over 50% of the respondents were quite happy with the Quality and about 32% with the Quantity.

Section 4

Respondent Perception of Community/Economic Planning & Development

4.1 Adequacy of Housing

4.2 Job Opportunities

4.3 Community/Economic Planning & Development

SECTION 4

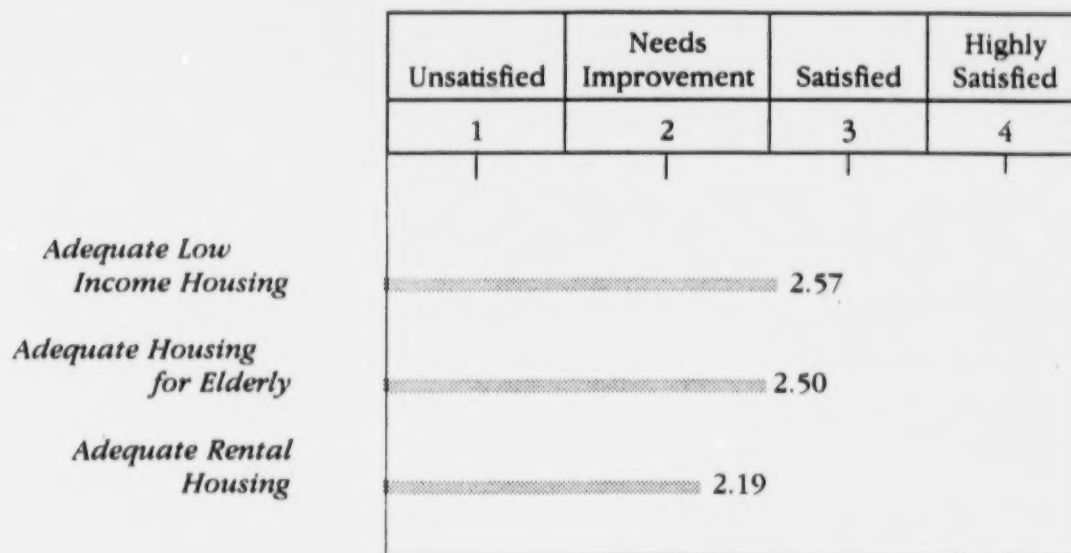
Respondent Perception of Community/Economic Planning & Development

Regarding Community/Economic Planning & Development, respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction on several aspects, such as the Adequacy of Housing, Job Opportunities, Community Planning & Development and Industrial Planning & Development. The rating scale ranges from Unsatisfied (1) to Highly Satisfied (4). Respondents were also given an option of No Opinion. Quite a few respondents (4-6%) chose not to answer some of the questions at all.

► 4.1 *Adequacy of Housing*

The mean scale rating for adequacy of three types of housing surveyed in this study (See Figure 9) appeared to fall below the satisfied level, especially Adequacy of Rental Housing which obtained the lowest ranking scale (MSR = 2.19).

Figure 9
Mean Scale Ratings on Adequacy of Housing



The frequency counts and percentage of respondents in each rating scale are shown in Table 7. It should be pointed out that there were quite a large number of respondents (31%) who had no opinion on Adequacy of Rental Housing and more than one-third (35-37%) did not give any satisfaction ratings on Adequacy of Elderly and Low Income Housing.

Table 7
Respondent Ratings of Adequacy of Housing Provided in the Community

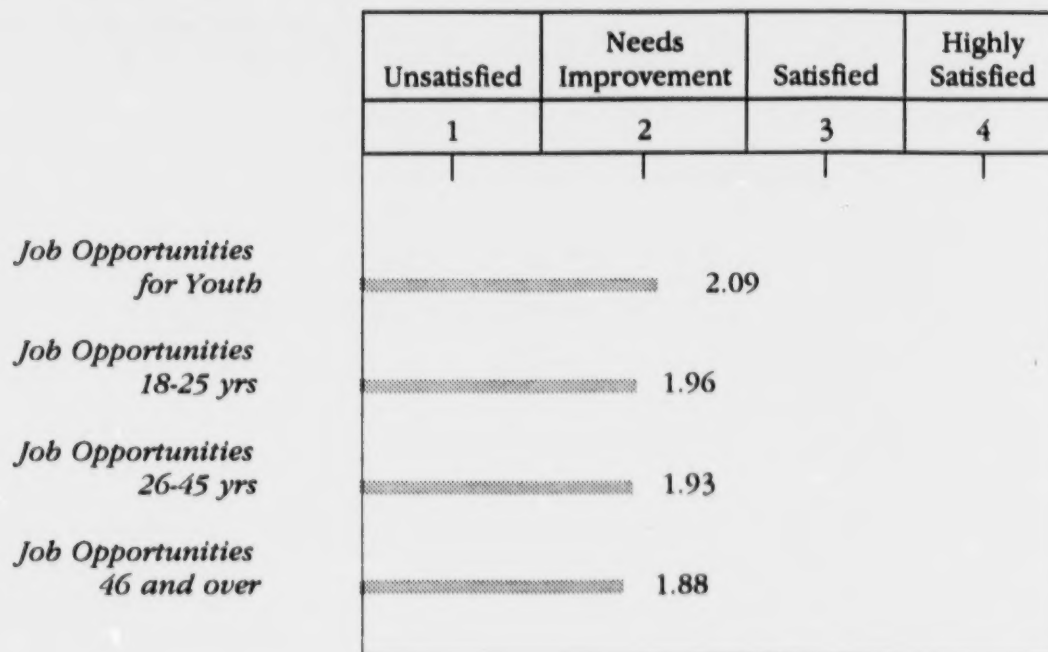
	Respondent Ratings: Count (percentage)					Total Responses (RR)
	Unsatisfied	Needs Improvement	Satisfied	Highly Satisfied	No Opinion	
Housing						
Adequate Rental Housing	85 (15%)	153 (28%)	134 (24%)	13 (2%)	174 (31%)	559 (96%)
Adequate Housing - Elderly	44 (8%)	119 (21%)	172 (31%)	26 (5%)	197 (35%)	558 (96%)
Adequate Low Income Housing	46 (8%)	104 (19%)	158 (28%)	44 (8%)	203 (37%)	555 (95%)

More than one-third of the respondents (36%) seemed to be quite satisfied or very satisfied with the adequacy of elderly and low income housing, while about one-fourth of the respondents shared the same perception on adequacy of rental housing. More than one-fourth of the respondents (28%) perceived a need for some improvements on the quantity of rental housing, while quite a few of the others (15%) were not satisfied at all. For the adequacy of low income and elderly housings, about one-fifth of the respondents (19-21%) also suggested improvement, while a small number of others (8%) expressed overall dissatisfaction.

► 4.2 Job Opportunities

One of the major concerns voiced by the respondents in the survey study happened to be on job opportunities for all age groups, especially for those aged 46 and over. The mean scale ratings on job opportunities for all age groups (See Figure 10) fall on the scale of Needs Improvement. It is quite surprising to find that job opportunities for age group 46 and over seemed to be the highest concern of all age groups. Such findings could be explained by the fact that the majority of respondents in this study were in age groups of 36-46 and over 60. They may express their perception more related to themselves.

Figure 10
Mean Scale Ratings on Job Opportunities in the Community



More than one-fifth of the respondents (23%) were pleased with the job opportunities for youth (Table 8) and about 15-16% shared the same satisfaction with job opportunities for the older age groups. On the opposite point of view, apparently 21-25% of other respondents were not at all satisfied with job opportunities for all age groups. The rest of the respondents, which were considered the majority of the group (40% or more), suggested improvements on job opportunities for those aged 18 up to seniors and so did the other one-third of respondents on the job opportunities for youth.

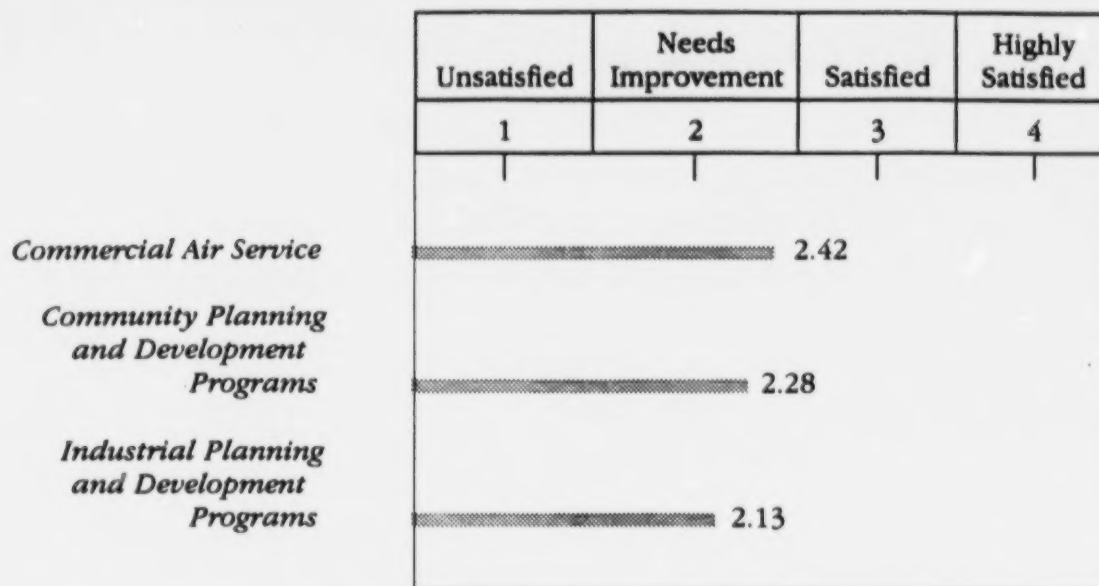
Table 8
Respondent Rating of Job Opportunities in the Community

	Respondent Ratings: Count (percentage)					Total Responses (RR)
	Unsatisfied	Needs Improvement	Satisfied	Highly Satisfied	No Opinion	
Job Opportunities for:						
Youth	115 (21%)	182 (33%)	128 (23%)	14 (3%)	107 (20%)	546 (94%)
18-25	123 (22%)	235 (43%)	87 (16%)	9 (2%)	93 (17%)	547 (94%)
26-45	134 (25%)	224 (42%)	87 (16%)	8 (1%)	88 (16%)	541 (93%)
46 and over	138 (25%)	219 (40%)	79 (15%)	4 (1%)	105 (19%)	545 (94%)

► **4.3 Community/Economic Planning & Development**

There were quite a few respondents (15-20%) who chose not to give any opinion on this issue. This may indicate that the question asked could be too broad or not specific enough. It is, therefore, suggested that the city do some follow-up on these issues and be more specific on the questions asked.

Figure 11
Mean Scale Ratings of Community/Industrial Planning & Development



The mean scale rating for Community/Economic Planning & Development falls a little bit beyond the Needs Improvement scale (See Figure 11). The Commercial Air Service scale (MSR = 2.42) lies approximately halfway between the Needs Improvement and Satisfied scales. It appeared that the residents in this study had more concerns with Industrial Planning & Development Programs (MSR = 2.13) than Community Planning & Development Programs (MSR = 2.28)

Table 9
Respondent Ratings of Community/Business Planning & Development

	Respondent Ratings: Count (percentage)					Total Responses (RR)
	Unsatisfied	Needs Improvement	Satisfied	Highly Satisfied	No Opinion	
Community Planning & Development Programs	88 (16%)	187 (34%)	175 (31%)	24 (4%)	81 (15%)	555 (95%)
Industrial Planning & Development Programs	107 (20%)	190 (34%)	128 (23%)	18 (3%)	113 (20%)	556 (96%)
Commercial Air Service	72 (13%)	164 (29%)	211 (38%)	30 (5%)	82 (15%)	559 (96%)

The frequency counts of respondents in each rating scale (Table 9) for Community/Industrial Planning & Development are divided among Unsatisfied, Needs Improvement and Satisfied, with the majority (34%) falling in the Needs Improvement scale. About 31% were well satisfied with Community Planning & Development programs, and this same positive view was also shown by more than one-fifth (23%) of the respondents on Industrial Planning & Development Programs. There were quite a few other respondents (16-20%) who perceived that plans and programs for community and industrial development were not up to the satisfactory level.

Regarding Commercial Air Services provided in the community, over 40% had no complaints about it and 29% of the other respondents suggested improvement. Quite a few of the respondents (13%) appeared to be not satisfied at all.

Section 5

Respondent Perception of Gering as a Place to Live

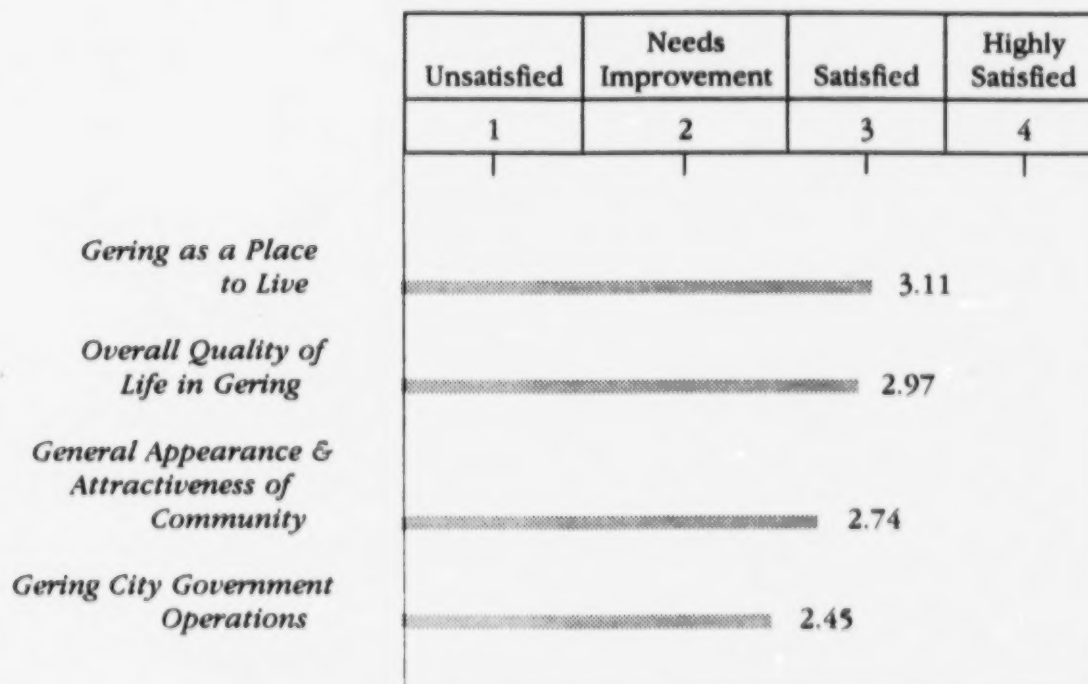
SECTION 5

Respondent Perception of Gering as a Place to Live

It is interesting to know how residents in a community perceive the place they live and the quality of their life in the community. In this section respondents were again asked to rate their satisfaction on several items about their community. The mean scale ratings of each item are illustrated in Figure 12.

Respondents represented in this study rated Gering as a place to live as being above the satisfied level (MSR = 3.11). The quality of life in Gering was also perceived at the satisfied level (MSR = 2.97). The mean scale rating of General Appearance & Attractiveness of Community falls a little bit below the satisfied level. The residents of Gering in this study perceived the City Government operation as being between the Needs Improvement and Satisfied levels.

Figure 12
Mean Scale Ratings of Gering as a Place to Live



One-fourth of respondents were very happy living in Gering and the majority of the other respondents (62%) had no complaints about their community. Very few of the respondents (2%) expressed dissatisfaction toward their community and another 11% believed it could be improved.

Table 10
Respondent Perception of the Gering Community as a Place to Live

	Respondent Ratings: Count (percentage)					Total Responses (RR)
	Unsatisfied	Needs Improvement	Satisfied	Highly Satisfied	No Opinion	
General Appearance & Attractiveness of Community	30 (5%)	143 (26%)	298 (55%)	65 (12%)	13 (2%)	549 (94%)
Rate Your Overall Quality of Life in Gering	10 (2%)	87 (15%)	382 (67%)	92 (16%)	0 (0%)	571 (98%)
Rate How Well the Gering City Government Operates	73 (13%)	181 (32%)	267 (47%)	26 (4%)	26 (4%)	573 (98%)
Rate Gering as a Place to Live	11 (2%)	61 (11%)	358 (62%)	145 (25%)	1 (-)	576 (99%)

The majority of residents represented in this study seemed to possess a positive attitude toward the quality of life in Gering. In fact, about 16% were highly satisfied with the quality of life there, while almost the same percentage (15%) still believe that the quality of life could be improved.

The large number of residents in this study (67%) were well content with the General Appearance and Attractiveness of their community. The rest of the other residents (31%) were less optimistic.

It is interesting to find out whether the length of residence in Gering has any effect on respondents' rankings in this section. The speculation that the longer the respondents resided in Gering, the more positive the attitude they developed toward their community was found to be unwarranted in this study. On the other hand, there was no significant correlation between the length of their residence in Gering and the rating scale on issues surveyed in this section.

Section 6

Respondent Opinions on Specific Programs/Services

SECTION 6

Respondent Opinions on Specific Programs/Services

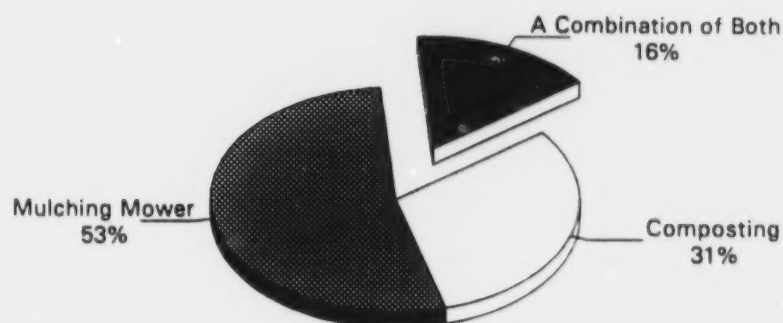
In this section the respondents were requested to express their opinion on some specific program or service operating in the community. There were quite a few respondents who may not know the answer to the question or chose not to give their opinion; therefore, the percentage of no response (NR) is reported along with the results.

Q: *The Nebraska Legislature has mandated no yard waste including grass clippings, leaves, etc. shall be disposed of in our landfill after 1994. Do you recycle yard waste?*

	<u>41%</u>	YES
✓	<u>56%</u>	NO
	<u>3%</u>	NR

More than half of the respondents surveyed in the study did not recycle their yard waste. Among those 41% who reported recycling their waste (See Figure 13), the majority of these (53%) used mulching mowers, approximately three out of ten used the composting method and the rest of them (16%) employed a combination of both.

Figure 13
Percentage of Respondents Using Different Recycling Methods



Q: Do you support and use the recycling program that is available?

✓ 67% YES
28% NO
4% NR

The majority of the respondents (well over half) support the recycling program that is available, but more than one-fourth of the other respondents did not. Four percent of the respondents had no answer to this question.

Q: Is your water pressure bigb, regular or low?

✓ 33% High
60% Regular
6% Low
1% NR

Well over half of the respondents perceived the water pressure as being regular, while approximately one-third have concerns of it being high. A small percentage (6%) of respondents reported their water pressure as being low.

Q: Have you ever had to request Fire Department Emergency Medical Service? If yes, did you receive a good response?

✓ 27% YES
73% NO

Out of 582 respondents who responded to this question, almost three-fourths have never requested Fire Department Emergency Medical Services. Of those 159 individuals or 27% who have requested such service, all of them except one person reported receiving good service.

Section 7

Respondents' Perception of the BEST and WORST Services the City Provided to its Residents

7.1 The BEST Services the City Provided to its Residents

7.2 The WORST Services the City Provided to its Residents

SECTION 7

**Respondent Perception of the Best and the Worst Services
the City Provided to Its Residents**

Given the list of 16 services provided by the City of Gering (See Figure 14), the respondents were asked to list (in order) three of those services which they thought provided the BEST service to them and also list (in order) another three services from the same list which they perceived as providing the WORST service.

Figure 14
List of Services Provided by the City of Gering

Electric	Sanitation	Cemetery	Utilities Office
Water	Fire	Golf Course	Recreational Facilities
Sewer	Police	Library	Landfill
Street	Parks	Tourism	Administration

► ***7.1 The Best Services the City Provided to Its Residents***

The results of the ranking order (#1, #2 and #3) of the BEST services provided by the City of Gering surveyed in this study are summarized in Figure 15. The frequency analysis of each ranking order (#1 to #3) for each of the services is presented in Appendix B. Since quite a few of the respondents did not make any choices, the response rate (RR) is reported along with each ranking order.

Figure 15
Ranking of the BEST Services the City Provided
to Its Residents

★★★	Electric (24%)	Parks (14%)	Fire (13%)	RR = 87%
★★	Parks (15%)	Water (14%)	Sanitation (10%)	RR = 85%
★	Fire (10%)	Parks (10%)	Library (10%)	RR = 81%

The #1 ranking (★★★) of BEST service provided to the residents appeared to be Electric Service, which was chosen by the majority of the respondents (24%) for this first order ranking. Much smaller percentages (14% and 13%, respectively) from the other respondents ranked Parks and Fire as their #1 in providing them the BEST service.

The services that were ranked as #2 (★★) in providing the BEST job to the residents were Parks (chosen by 15% of respondents), Water (chosen by 14% of respondents) and Sanitation (chosen by 10% of respondents).

There appeared to be no consensus on ranking any particular service as #3 (★) in providing the BEST job to the residents. Three services, Fire, Parks and Library, are ranked in this third order by the same percentage of respondents (10%).

► 7.2 *The WORST Services the City Provided to Its Residents*

Figure 16 summarizes the results of the ranking order (worst #1 to worst #3) of those services that were perceived as offering the WORST service to the residents of Gering. The detailed rankings of each of the services are presented in the frequency analysis tables in Appendix C. RR (Response Rate) refers to the percentage of those respondents who made their choices.

Figure 16
Ranking of the WORST Services the City Provided to Its Residents

☹☹☹	Administration (19%)	Street (17%)		RR = 71%
☹☹	Street (10%)	Administration (7%)	Tourism (6%)	RR = 57%
☹	Administration (8%)	Street (8%)	Landfill (6%)	RR = 44%

It is noted that a large number of respondents (29-56%) chose not to respond to this question. The #1 ranking (☹☹☹) of the worst services the City provided to its residents appeared to be Administration (ranked by 19% of respondents) and Street (ranked by 17% of respondents). Street and Administration were listed again as #2 worst (☹☹) services. This ranking was agreed upon, however, by a small percentage of respondents (7-10%). Another small percentage of respondents (8%) also listed Administration and Street as being the #3 WORST (☹) services in the community. Landfill was also cited in this category by about 6% of the respondents.

Section 8

Respondents' Attitude toward Living in Gering

- 8.1 *The Three Things Respondents Like MOST about Living in Gering*
- 8.2 *The Three Things Respondents Like LEAST about Living in Gering*
- 8.3 *The Three Biggest Problems that Gering May Face with the Next Five Years*

SECTION 8

Respondents' Attitudes Toward Living in Gering

Questions asked in this last section were open-ended. The respondents were asked to list three things they like MOST about living in Gering, three things they like LEAST about living in Gering, and the three BIGGEST problems that they perceived Gering will face within the next five years.

Due to the nature of open-ended questions, the responses were free format, varied and different from each other even though they convey the same message. Some of those similar responses, therefore, were grouped under a new and broader category. Lists of responses that were grouped under each category are presented in Appendices D & E. Frequency analysis was then performed on those categories generated.

► **8.1 Three Things Respondents like MOST About Living in Gering**

Out of the total of 582 respondents, 501 individuals (86% response rate) took time to list things that they like MOST. The results of the frequency analysis were summarized and are presented in order of the MOST liked #1, #2 and #3 as cited by the respondents (See Figures 17, 18 and 19).

Figure 17

List of Things Residents Like MOST #1 About Living in Gering

1	Things Listed as #1 for Most Liked	
	☺☺☺	<u>% Cited</u>
►	Small Community Atmosphere	22%
►	Friendly People (Neighborhood)	20%
►	School System	13%
►	Quiet & Peaceful Environment	11%
	☺☺☺ OTHERS ☺☺☺	
☐	Clean Community	☐ Safe Community
		☐ Good Location
☐	Community Services/ Facilities	☐ Parks & Recreational Facilities

For the things that the residents listed as the MOST liked #1 (Figure 17), there appeared to be a consensus on several common things. Small Community Atmosphere was listed the most frequently by 22% of the respondents. Friendly People (Neighborhood) was listed as the second most frequent by 20% of the respondents, followed by School System (13% of respondents) and Quiet & Peaceful Environment (11% of respondents). It is noted again that each category listed in Figure 17 was generated from several similar responses cited by respondents. The list of all responses under each category is summarized in Appendix D. There were several other categories that were also cited by quite a few respondents, and they are listed in ascending order of frequency in Figure 17.

It seemed that a smaller majority of respondents agreed on any particular categories that they listed as the MOST liked #2 (See Figure 18). Friendly People (Neighborhood) was listed as the MOST liked #2 by the largest percentage of respondents (18%). School System and Quiet & Peaceful Environment were chosen as the MOST liked #2 by the same percentage of respondents (11%). About 9% of respondents cited Community Services/Facilities as their second MOST liked. It should be pointed out that Fire Protection and Police Department were cited the most frequently among city services/facilities in the Community Services category. Other categories that were also cited by respondents (8% or less) were Small Community, Good Location, Parks & Recreational Facilities, etc.

Figure 18
List of Things Residents Like MOST #2 About Living in Gering

2 Things Listed as #2 for Most Liked		
	☺☺	% Cited
▶ Friendly People (Neighborhood)		18%
▶ School System		11%
▶ Quiet & Peaceful Environment		11%
▶ Community Services/Facilities		9%
☺☺ OTHERS ☺☺		
☐ Small Community	☐ Good Location	☐ Parks & Recreational Facilities
☐ Safe Community	☐ Clean Community	☐ Low Cost
☐ Clean Environment	☐ Climate	

Similar categories appeared to be cited again by the respondents as the #3 MOST liked (See Figure 19). Nevertheless, there was less consensus or percentage of respondents in any particular category. Community Services/Facilities was chosen by the highest percentage of respondents (14%), followed by Good Location and School System, which were chosen by the same percentage of respondents (12%). Friendly People (Neighborhood) and Small Community Atmosphere were selected again as #3 MOST liked, but by a much smaller percentage of respondents (9% and 8%, respectively). Other categories that were also cited in this ranking order by a smaller percentage of respondents (7% or less) were Parks & Recreational Facilities, Quiet & Peaceful Environment, etc. (See Figure 19).

Figure 19
List of Things Residents Like MOST #3 About Living in Gering

3 Things Listed as #3 for MOST Liked		
	☺	% Cited
▶ Community Services/Facilities		14%
▶ Good Location		12%
▶ School System		12%
▶ Friendly People (Neighborhood)		9%
▶ Small Community Atmosphere		8%
☺ OTHERS ☺		
☐ Parks & Recreational Facilities	☐ Quiet & Peaceful Environment	☐ Low Cost
☐ Clean Community	☐ Safe Community	☐ Historical & Beautiful Scenery
☐ Climate		

In summary, there was quite a clear consensus on the things the residents liked the MOST about being in Gering. Those are listed in order as follows:

- | | |
|-----|-----------------------------------|
| ☺☺☺ | 1. Small Community Atmosphere |
| ☺☺ | 2. Friendly People (Neighborhood) |
| ☺ | 3. Community Services/Facilities |

► 8.2 *Three Things Respondents like LEAST About Living in Gering*

Regarding this issue, 459 respondents (79% of respondents) expressed their opinions. The list of things that respondents cited as their LEAST liked appeared to be more diversified than those listed that they liked MOST. Nevertheless, those responses that seemed to fall in the same category were grouped (See Appendix E) and frequency analysis was then performed on those generated categories. The list of categories that the respondents cited most often are illustrated in Figures 20-22 in order of LEAST liked #1 to LEAST liked #3.

Figure 20
List of Things Residents Like LEAST #1 About Living in Gering

1 Things Listed as #1 for Least Liked		
☹☹☹		% Cited
► Entertainment Opportunities		15%
► High Taxes		12%
► Community Environment		12%
► Street Maintenance		9%
☹☹☹ OTHERS ☹☹☹		
☐ Job Opportunities	☐ Administration	☐ Community Planning & Development
☐ Sanitation	☐ Civic Center Issues	☐ Railroads
☐ Economic Planning & Development	☐ Weather	☐ Public Services/Facilities

The majority of respondents (15%) in the study appeared to be most dissatisfied with the limited Entertainment Opportunities available in the community. The types of entertainment (See Appendix E) cited most often were Shopping and Restaurants. Another LEAST liked thing that was also cited by a majority of respondents (12%) was High Taxes, especially the increase of property taxes. The same percentage of respondents expressed their dissatisfaction with Community Environment. Annoyance from pets, especially cats and dogs running loose, was cited most often in this category. Street Maintenance was identified as #1 LEAST liked by 9% of respondents. The major complaint regarding Street Maintenance was poor snow removal, especially around residential areas. Other major complaints under the Street Maintenance category included bad condition of streets and traffic lights.

Other things listed in this ranking order, but by a smaller percentage of respondents (less than 7%) were Job Opportunities, Administration, Community Planning & Development, Sanitation, Civic Center Issues, Railroads, Economic Planning & Development, Weather and Public Services/Facilities. The nature of complaints under each category can be found in Appendix E.

Respondents' perception on things that they like LEAST #2 was quite diversified (See Figure 21). Almost the same percentage (14%) cited the same category, Entertainment Opportunities, as LEAST liked #2 as well as LEAST liked #1 (cited by 15% of respondents). Street Maintenance was listed by the second highest percentage of respondents (11%), followed by Community Environment (9%) and Economic Planning & Development (7%).

Figure 21
List of Things Residents Like LEAST #2 About Living in Gering

2 Things Listed as #2 for Least Liked	
⊗⊗	% Cited
► Entertainment Opportunities	14%
► Street Maintenance	11%
► Community Environment	9%
► Economic Planning & Development	7%
⊗⊗ OTHERS ⊗⊗	
☐ High Taxes	☐ Sanitation
☐ Community Planning & Development	☐ Administration
☐ Job Opportunities	☐ Civic Center Issues
	☐ Public Services/Facilities
	☐ Railroads
	☐ Cost of Living

Regarding Community Environment, respondents seemed to be most dissatisfied with the appearance of the community, such as junkyards and dead trees. The complaint cited most often under the Economic Planning & Development category was business & industrial growth.

Other categories identified in the second ranking of LEAST liked were High Taxes, Sanitation, Administration, Community Planning & Development, etc. The nature of respondents' complaints or dissatisfaction in each category are summarized and presented in Appendix E.

There appeared to be no consensus among respondents in choosing things that they disliked most #3. As illustrated in Figure 22, the same percentage of respondents agreed on several categories. Entertainment Opportunities was again cited by the highest percentage of respondents (12%). The next highest percentage of respondents (10%) expressed their dissatisfaction with Community Environment.

Figure 22
List of Things Residents Like LEAST #3 About Living in Gering

3 Things Listed as #3 for LEAST Liked		
	⊗	% Cited
▶ Entertainment Opportunities		12%
▶ Community Environment		10%
▶ Street Maintenance		9%
▶ Administration		9%
▶ Community Planning & Development		9%
▶ Public Services/Facilities		7%
⊗ OTHERS ⊗		
☐ Economic Planning & Development	☐ Civic Center Issues	☐ Sanitation
☐ Increasing Taxes	☐ Job Opportunities	☐ Railroads

The same percentage of respondents (9%) cited Street Maintenance, Administration and Community Planning & Development. About 7% of respondents voiced complaints on Public Services/Facilities, which included limitation of recreational facilities for youth and public transportation.

A small number of other respondents (6% or less) listed things they disliked, which fall into such categories as Economic Planning & Development, Civic Center Issues, Sanitation, Increasing Taxes, Job Opportunities and Railroads.

In conclusion, residents represented in this study mostly agreed on the things that they like LEAST about living in Gering. Entertainment Opportunities was cited as the LEAST liked #1, #2 and #3 by the highest percentage of respondents in each ranking order (15%, 14% and 12%, respectively). Nevertheless, when it came to the categories that were cited by the second highest percentage of respondents, there appeared to be some variations.

The criteria in ranking the smaller percentages of LEAST liked among those categories were to sum up the percentages in each category and rank them accordingly. The ranking list is presented as follows:

⊗⊗⊗ Entertainment Opportunities

⊗⊗ Community Environment

⊗ Street Maintenance

► **8.3 The Three Biggest Problems that Gering May Face Within the Next Five Years**

Approximately 85% of respondents in this study responded to this question. Since the question was open-ended, the responses obtained were quite broad. The analysis of this question was based on the frequency counts on those similar problems cited the most often. The results from the analysis are presented in Figure 23.

Figure 23

Major Problems that Gering May Face in the Near Future	
	<u>% Cited</u>
► Civic Center Issues	36%
► Increasing Taxes	31%
► Job Opportunities	25%
► Economic Planning & Development	24%
► Schools	12%
► Housing	11%
► Sanitation	11%
► Budget/Debt	8%

The majority of the respondents who answered this question (36%) appeared to have the most concerns with Civic Center Issues. Problems cited were as follows:

Civic Center Issues

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Paying for or supporting Civic Center | ☐ Lack of Hotels & Restaurants @ Civic Center |
| ☐ Make use of Civic Center | ☐ Keeping Civic Center busy |
| ☐ Civic Center expenses | ☐ Overbuilt on Civic Center |
| ☐ Getting Renters for Civic Center | ☐ Downfall of Civic Center |
| ☐ Recouping from Loss of Money into Civic Center | |
-

The second major problem cited by respondents (31%) was Tax Issues. The nature of complaints are as follows:

Tax Issues

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Higher taxes | ☐ Tax Increases |
| ☐ Too high of taxes | ☐ Tax burden caused by Civic Center |
| ☐ City Tax | ☐ Increased Taxes from Civic Center Center |
| ☐ Keeping Taxes Low | ☐ Raising Real Estate Taxes |
| ☐ Increasing Tax Problems | ☐ Property Taxes |
| ☐ Increase of Property Taxes | ☐ Tax Base |
| ☐ Maintain Tax Base | ☐ Higher Taxes to Cover Expenses |
-

Job Opportunities was another major concern voiced by one-fourth of the respondents. Some common statements expressed by the respondents are as follows:

Job Opportunities		
☐ Unemployment	☐ Lack of Jobs	☐ Employment Decline
☐ Not enough good jobs	☐ Job Availability	☐ Job Prospects
☐ Lack of Jobs	☐ Good Job Availability	☐ Low Wages
☐ Industrial Jobs	☐ Needs higher paying jobs	☐ No (mfg) work
☐ No job opportunities for teenagers		☐ Creating more jobs
☐ Loosing younger generation - no jobs here		
☐ Lack of good, steady employers for the future		
☐ Out-migration of young adults due to low-paying jobs		

Approximately another one-fourth (24%) of respondents perceived Economic Planning & Development as a major problem that Gering may face in the near future. The problems that were cited most regarding this issue are as follows:

Economic Planning & Development

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| ☐ Lack of industries | ☐ Renewal of downtown | ☐ Needs more business |
| ☐ Not enough industries | ☐ More industry needed | ☐ Store failures |
| ☐ No industrial/economic growth | ☐ Working conditions | ☐ Needs to maintain & improve business district |
| ☐ Not being joined to Scottsbluff | | ☐ Loss of business |
| ☐ Need of economic development | ☐ People moving out | ☐ Keeping business in town |
| ☐ Economic growth of Gering | ☐ Keeping local small businesses in operation | |
| ☐ Loss of retail stores | | ☐ Developing tourism |
| ☐ Attracting new industry and business | | |
| ☐ Getting any industry | | ☐ Further decline of business |
| ☐ Keeping young people in our community | | |
| ☐ By future community planning | | ☐ Attracting people to move here |
| ☐ Loss of business to Scottsbluff | | ☐ More retired people, less working people |
| ☐ Adequate access to 4 lanes into Gering | | ☐ Overdependence on agriculture |
| ☐ Lack of preparation for tourism & visitors | | ☐ Need more downtown retail outlets |
| ☐ Decline in income-producing population | | ☐ Welfare abuse |
| ☐ Lack of economic diversity | | ☐ Attracting tourists to stay overnight or longer |
| ☐ Access to new "Heartland Expressway" | | |
| ☐ Deterioration of downtown business area | | |
| ☐ Influx of welfare families | | ☐ Lack of manufacturing |

A much smaller percentage of other respondents (8-12%) cited such issues as Schools, Housing, Sanitation and Budget/Debt as their major concerns for Gering within the next five years. The list of problems cited under each of these issues is summarized and presented in Figure 24.

Figure 24
Categories Generated From Problems Residents Cited as the Biggest
Problems that Gering May Face Within the Next Five Years

Schools		
☐ Elementary school decisions	☐ More schools	☐ Adequate room in our schools
☐ Discipline in schools	☐ Elementary schools	☐ Controlling education costs
☐ School improvements	☐ Overcrowded schools	☐ Schools up to requirements
☐ Lack of schools	☐ New schools	☐ Education quality diminishing
☐ School system too liberal	☐ Improving or building schools	☐ School funding
☐ School reorganization	☐ School overcrowding	☐ School facilities
Housing		
☐ Not enough housing	☐ Housing for elderly	☐ Housing for low-income families
☐ Rental housing	☐ Single housing for young & old	
☐ Nursing homes	☐ Affordable housing	☐ Population outgrowing available housing
☐ Housing development	☐ No apartments	☐ Develop new, high-quality, mid-income housing
☐ Lack of new residential lots to build on		
☐ Provision for the retired who need a retirement home		
Sanitation		
☐ Poor drainage	☐ Lagoon smells	☐ The dump
☐ Storm/sewer drainage system	☐ Water supply	☐ Yard waste
☐ Garbage	☐ EPA mandates	☐ Water lines
☐ Water quality	☐ Waste disposal	☐ Close of landfill
☐ Sewer	☐ Smells	☐ Garbage removal
☐ Dead tree treatment	☐ Water treatment & recycling	

Figure 24 (Continued)

Budget/Debt		
☐ Paying for detention home	☐ Indebtedness	☐ Keeping costs in line
☐ Overspending	☐ Funding public facilities	☐ Welfare
☐ City bills	☐ Financial support for county/city offices	
☐ Lack of adequate funds to operate government	☐ Revenue	☐ Meeting local government budget limitations
☐ Revenue income	☐ Number of residents on social welfare	
☐ City Hall debt	☐ Erosion of Federal funds	☐ Loss of tax dollars (older people in retirement)
☐ No balanced budget	☐ School & Government spending is out of control	

Based on the perceptions of the respondents in this study, the new Civic Center appeared to be quite a controversial issue among them. While the majority of respondents complained that they did not have a chance to vote on the construction of this Center and were afraid that the Center may not pay for itself, a small number of residents suggested building more motels and restaurants to enhance the usability of the Center. The belief that the Center may not function profitably caused the majority of respondents to have concerns about taxes increasing in the near future. This is evident from the responses of those who cited the tax issue as one of the biggest problems. More than half of them explicitly stated that the high taxes would be a result of the Civic Center expenses.

Appendix A

Example of Gering 1992-93 Community Attitude Survey

GERING 1992-93 COMMUNITY ATTITUDE SURVEY

PLEASE TAKE A FEW MINUTES TO FILL OUT THE SURVEY TO IDENTIFY THE STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF OUR COMMUNITY. YOUR CANDID RESPONSES WILL HELP IDENTIFY AREAS OF CONCERN AND HELP PLAN FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS. ALL RESPONSES ARE CONFIDENTIAL.

Rate the following rates charged for services:

	<u>LOW</u>	<u>REASONABLE</u>	<u>HIGH</u>	<u>NO OPINION</u>
1. Electricity	1	2	3	4
2. Water	1	2	3	4
3. Sewer	1	2	3	4
4. Sanitation	1	2	3	4
5. Natural Gas	1	2	3	4

UNSATISFACTORY SATISFACTORY NEEDS IMPROVEMENT HIGHLY SATISFACTORY NO OPINION

Rate the following public services/facilities:

6. Water Availability	1	2	3	4	5
7. Water Quality	1	2	3	4	5
8. Sewage Treatment	1	2	3	4	5
9. Storm Water Drainage	1	2	3	4	5
10. Garbage Collection	1	2	3	4	5
11. Snow Removal	1	2	3	4	5
12. Electrical Service	1	2	3	4	5
13. Natural Gas Service	1	2	3	4	5
14. Telephone Service	1	2	3	4	5
15. Fire Protection	1	2	3	4	5
16. Street Maintenance	1	2	3	4	5
17. Traffic Signals & Signs	1	2	3	4	5
18. Street Lighting	1	2	3	4	5
19. Police Traffic & Enforcement	1	2	3	4	5

Rate the following facilities:

20. Library	1	2	3	4	5
21. Day Care Facilities for Children	1	2	3	4	5
22. Care Facilities for Seniors	1	2	3	4	5
23. Parks & Picnic Areas	1	2	3	4	5
24. Swimming	1	2	3	4	5
25. Playgrounds	1	2	3	4	5
26. Fields for Baseball & Other Sports	1	2	3	4	5
27. Golf	1	2	3	4	5
28. Cultural Opportunities	1	2	3	4	5
29. Tennis Courts	1	2	3	4	5

Rate the following services:

30. Restaurant Availability/Quality	1	2	3	4	5
31. Motel Availability/Quality	1	2	3	4	5
32. Quality of Shopping Facilities	1	2	3	4	5
33. Number of Shopping Facilities	1	2	3	4	5

Rate the adequacy of the following:

34. Adequate Rental Housing	1	2	3	4	5
35. Adequate Housing for Elderly	1	2	3	4	5
36. Adequate Low Income Housing	1	2	3	4	5
37. Industrial Planning & Development Programs	1	2	3	4	5
38. Community Planning & Development Programs	1	2	3	4	5
39. General Appearance & Attractiveness of Community	1	2	3	4	5
40. Commercial Air Service	1	2	3	4	5

Rate the job opportunities for:

41. Youth	1	2	3	4	5
42. 18 to 25	1	2	3	4	5
43. 26 to 45	1	2	3	4	5
44. 46 and over	1	2	3	4	5
45. Taking all things into consideration, how would you rate your overall quality of life in Gering?	1	2	3	4	5

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46. In general, how well does the Gering city government operate? 1 2 3 4 5
47. How do you rate Gering as a place to live? 1 2 3 4 5
48. The Nebraska Legislature has mandated no yard waste including grass clippings, leaves, etc. shall be disposed of in our landfill after 1994. Do you recycle yard waste?
☐ YES, how? ☐ mulching mower ☐ composting
☐ NO
49. Do you support and use the recycling program that is available? ☐ YES ☐ NO
50. Is your water pressure ☐ HIGH ☐ REGULAR ☐ LOW?
51. Have you ever had to request Fire Department Emergency Medical Services? ☐ YES ☐ NO
 If yes, did you receive a good response? ☐ YES ☐ NO (CONTINUED ON BACK OF PAGE >)
52. What three things do you like most about living in Gering?
 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____
53. What three things do you like least about living in Gering?
 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____
54. What do you think will be the three biggest problems that Gering will face within the next five years?
 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

LIST OF SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE CITY OF GERING

Electric	Street	Police	Golf Course	Utilities Office	Administration
Water	Sanitation	Parks	Library	Recreation Facilities	
Sewer	Fire	Cemetery	Tourism	Landfill	

55. Which three of the ABOVE city services do you think the City of Gering does the BEST job of providing its residents?
 1. _____
 2. _____
 3. _____
56. Which three of the ABOVE city services do you think the City of Gering does the WORST job of providing its residents?
 1. _____
 2. _____
 3. _____
57. How long have you lived in Gering? _____ years _____ months

RESPONDENT PROFILE:

58. Please check the appropriate information for yourself.

Gender: ☐ Male Age: ☐ 16-25 Education: ☐ 0-11 years
☐ Female ☐ 26-35 ☐ Completed High School
☐ 36-45 ☐ 1-3 Years of College
☐ 46-60 ☐ 4 Years of College
☐ Over 60 ☐ 5+ Years of College

Ethnic Group: ☐ Anglo/Caucasian
☐ Afro American
☐ Native American
☐ Hispanic
☐ Other

Marital Status: ☐ Married
☐ Divorced
☐ Widowed
☐ Separated
☐ Never Married

Are you a Single Parent? ☐ Yes ☐ No

59. Within the last 12 months, was the total income of all members of your family less than the figure shown for your family size? Please answer only for your family size.

1 person family	less than \$16,750	YES	NO
2 person family	less than 19,150	YES	NO
3 person family	less than 21,550	YES	NO
4 person family	less than 23,900	YES	NO
5 person family	less than 25,850	YES	NO
6 person family	less than 27,750	YES	NO
7 person family	less than 29,650	YES	NO
8+ person family	less than 31,550	YES	NO

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION. YOU MAY RETURN THIS SURVEY WITH YOUR UTILITY BILL MAIL ROOM DELIVERY TO CITY HALL, P. O. BOX 687, 1025 "P" STREET, GERING, NEBRASKA 69141.

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Appendix B

Frequency Analysis of the Ranking Order of the BEST Services the City Provides to its Residents

Frequency Analysis of the Ranking Order of the BEST Services the City Provides to its Resident

Q: Which three of the listed city services do you think the City of Gering does the BEST job of providing its residents?

FIRST CHOICE:

Value Label	Value	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cum Percent
ELECTRIC	1	140	24.1	27.9	27.9
WATER	2	21	3.6	4.2	32.1
STREET	4	6	1.0	1.2	33.3
SANITATION	5	16	2.7	3.2	36.5
FIRE	6	77	13.2	15.3	51.8
POLICE	7	63	10.8	12.5	64.3
PARKS	8	82	14.1	16.3	80.7
CEMETERY	9	20	3.4	4.0	84.7
GOLF COURSE	10	10	1.7	2.0	86.7
LIBRARY	11	30	5.2	6.0	92.6
TOURISM	12	4	.7	.8	93.4
UTILITIES OFFICE	13	9	1.5	1.8	95.2
REC FACILITIES	14	18	3.1	3.6	98.8
LANDFILL	15	2	.3	.4	99.2
ADMINISTRATION	16	4	.7	.8	100.0
.	.	80	13.7	Missing	
Total		582	100.0	100.0	

Valid cases 502

Missing cases 80

SECOND CHOICE:

Value Label	Value	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cum Percent
ELECTRIC	1	50	8.6	10.2	10.2
WATER	2	82	14.1	16.7	26.8
SEWER	3	5	.9	1.0	27.8
STREET	4	6	1.0	1.2	29.1
SANITATION	5	22	3.8	4.5	33.5
FIRE	6	59	10.1	12.0	45.5
POLICE	7	43	7.4	8.7	54.3
PARKS	8	88	15.1	17.9	72.2
CEMETERY	9	30	5.2	6.1	78.3
GOLF COURSE	10	17	2.9	3.5	81.7
LIBRARY	11	37	6.4	7.5	89.2
TOURISM	12	16	2.7	3.3	92.5
UTILITIES OFFICE	13	11	1.9	2.2	94.7
REC FACILITIES	14	24	4.1	4.9	99.6
ADMINISTRATION	16	2	.3	.4	100.0
.	.	90	15.5	Missing	
Total		582	100.0	100.0	

Q: Which three of the listed city services do you think the City of Gering does the BEST job of providing its residents?

Valid cases 492 Missing cases 90

THIRD CHOICE:

Value Label	Value	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cum Percent
ELECTRIC	1	29	5.0	6.2	6.2
WATER	2	27	4.6	5.7	11.9
SEWER	3	17	2.9	3.6	15.5
STREET	4	11	1.9	2.3	17.9
SANITATION	5	28	4.8	6.0	23.8
FIRE	6	60	10.3	12.8	36.6
POLICE	7	45	7.7	9.6	46.2
PARKS	8	59	10.1	12.6	58.7
CEMETERY	9	49	8.4	10.4	69.1
GOLF COURSE	10	12	2.1	2.6	71.7
LIBRARY	11	58	10.0	12.3	84.0
TOURISM	12	18	3.1	3.8	87.9
UTILITIES OFFICE	13	20	3.4	4.3	92.1
REC FACILITIES	14	26	4.5	5.5	97.7
LANDFILL	15	9	1.5	1.9	99.6
ADMINISTRATION	16	2	.3	.4	100.0
.		112	19.2	Missing	
Total		582	100.0	100.0	

Valid cases 470 Missing cases 112

Appendix C

**Frequency Analysis of the Ranking Order of the WORST Services the City
Provides to its Residents**

Frequency Analysis of the Ranking Order of the WORST Services the City Provides to its Residents

Q: Which three of the listed city services do you think the City of Gering does the WORST job of providing its residents?

FIRST CHOICE:

Value Label	Value	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cum Percent
ELECTRIC	1	10	1.7	2.4	2.4
WATER	2	18	3.1	4.3	6.8
SEWER	3	18	3.1	4.3	11.1
STREET	4	100	17.2	24.2	35.3
SANITATION	5	18	3.1	4.3	39.6
FIRE	6	1	.2	.2	39.9
POLICE	7	33	5.7	8.0	47.8
PARKS	8	4	.7	1.0	48.8
CEMETERY	9	2	.3	.5	49.3
GOLF COURSE	10	8	1.4	1.9	51.2
LIBRARY	11	6	1.0	1.4	52.7
TOURISM	12	26	4.5	6.3	58.9
UTILITIES OFFICE	13	8	1.4	1.9	60.9
REC FACILITIES	14	22	3.8	5.3	66.2
LANDFILL	15	27	4.6	6.5	72.7
ADMINISTRATION	16	113	19.4	27.3	100.0
.	.	168	28.9	Missing	
Total		582	100.0	100.0	

Valid cases 414 Missing cases 168

SECOND CHOICE:

Value Label	Value	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cum Percent
ELECTRIC	1	5	.9	1.5	1.5
WATER	2	12	2.1	3.6	5.1
SEWER	3	10	1.7	3.0	8.2
STREET	4	57	9.8	17.2	25.4
SANITATION	5	29	5.0	8.8	34.1
FIRE	6	4	.7	1.2	35.3
POLICE	7	28	4.8	8.5	43.8
PARKS	8	10	1.7	3.0	46.8
CEMETERY	9	4	.7	1.2	48.0
GOLF COURSE	10	11	1.9	3.3	51.4
LIBRARY	11	6	1.0	1.8	53.2
TOURISM	12	38	6.5	11.5	64.7
UTILITIES OFFICE	13	8	1.4	2.4	67.1
REC FACILITIES	14	36	6.2	10.9	77.9
LANDFILL	15	34	5.8	10.3	88.2
ADMINISTRATION	16	39	6.7	11.8	100.0
.	.	251	43.1	Missing	
Total		582	100.0	100.0	

Valid cases 331 Missing cases 251

Q: Which three of the listed city services do you think the City of Gering does the WORST job of providing its residents?

THIRD CHOICE:

Value Label	Value	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cum Percent
ELECTRIC	1	2	.3	.8	.8
WATER	2	13	2.2	5.1	5.8
SEWER	3	16	2.7	6.2	12.1
STREET	4	46	7.9	17.9	30.0
SANITATION	5	11	1.9	4.3	34.2
POLICE	7	14	2.4	5.4	39.7
PARKS	8	5	.9	1.9	41.6
CEMETERY	9	3	.5	1.2	42.8
GOLF COURSE	10	6	1.0	2.3	45.1
LIBRARY	11	3	.5	1.2	46.3
TOURISM	12	28	4.8	10.9	57.2
UTILITIES OFFICE	13	7	1.2	2.7	59.9
REC FACILITIES	14	22	3.8	8.6	68.5
LANDFILL	15	34	5.8	13.2	81.7
ADMINISTRATION	16	47	8.1	18.3	100.0
.		325	55.8	Missing	
		-----	-----	-----	
Total		582	100.0	100.0	

Appendix D

**Categories Generated from Things that Respondents like MOST
About Living in Gering**

Categories Generated from Things that Respondents like MOST about Living in Gering

☺ SMALL COMMUNITY ATMOSPHERE		
Small town	Size	Small population
Small town environment	Rural setting	Small town convenience
Small size	Bedroom community	It's not too crowded
Small city	We like small towns	Small town quality
Small community	Healthy little town	Small town friendliness
Small town life	Small town vs. large town	Not too big
Small town environment	Beautiful small town	Rural area
Conservative	Security of being in small community	
☺ FRIENDLY PEOPLE (NEIGHBORS)		
Good neighbors	Neighborhood	Friendliness
People	Nice people	Friendliness of people
Good people	Excellent neighbors	Friendly merchants
Friendly community	Support of people	Friendly residents
Friendly town	The closeness of people	Close-knit neighborhood
Family-oriented area	Always help if needed	Community spirit
Attractive neighborhood	Friendly community spirit	
☺ SCHOOL SYSTEM		
Schools	Very good schooling	Excellent school system
Good schools	My kids like school	Fair schools
School system	Quality schools	Schools are better
Public school system	Great schools	Small community school system
☺ QUIET & PEACEFUL ENVIRONMENT		
Peaceful	Quiet neighborhood	Quiet & slow paced
Not much noise	Quiet town	Not a busy area
It is quiet	Less traffic	Pleasant
Quiet city	Quiet surroundings	Slower lifestyle
Nice residential areas	Restful	Quiet - no major traffic problems

☺ GOOD LOCATION		
Ease of moving about	Walking distance to school	Close of major cultural events
In reach of college	Close to family	Close to a few bigger cities
Near church	Close to work	Physical surroundings
Quick commute anywhere	Location to groc.	Above flood plain
Convenient	Residential community	Close to college
Easy to get around	Close to malls w/o traffic	Space for future growth
Easy access to major highways & routes	Within driving distance of several cities	Higher elevation than Scottsbluff
Not as many low-income families		
☺ PARKS & RECREATIONAL FACILITIES		
Recreational facilities	Nice parks & recreation	Excellent & well-kept parks
School sports - wrestling	Baseball park	Parks
Fire Dept.	Nice parks	Golf course
Availability of various sports	Youth programs	Sports programs available during school & in summer
Access to hunting, fishing & rec		
☺ SAFE COMMUNITY		
Personal safety	Minimal crime	Safe to raise a family
Less crime than big city	Safety of small town	Lack of crime
Low violent crime	Safe area for children	Low crime rate
Relatively free of crime	Low crime	Safe place to live
Program against drugs	Gambling is kept to a minimum	

☺ **COMMUNITY SERVICES/FACILITIES**

Friendly police	Very good services	Good police department
Good police protection	Civic protection - fire & police	Adequate public facilities
City trying to produce growth	Good Fire Dept.	Range of entertainment
Good banking services	Many banks	Grocery stores close
Good streets	Good churches	Good facilities
Area activities	City services	Library
Excellent Fire Dept.	Law enforcement	Wide streets
Downtown park	Plenty of parking	Good representation by City Gov't.
Access to schools/library, churches, doctors, etc.		

☺ **CLEAN ENVIRONMENT**

Clean streets	Fairly clean	Abundance of big trees
Cleanliness	Clean & fairly well-maintained	Not much pollution yet
Sanitation	Overall clean	Clean town
Clear air	Good air quality	No pollution
Smog free	Fresh air	

☺ **LOW COST**

Low utilities rates	Cost	Utilities reasonable
Affordable housing	Utilities are cheap	Economical
Lower electric bill	Economical place to live	Cost of housing
Lower utilities than Scottsbluff	Price of living is suitable	Lower property taxes
Cost of living	Reasonable taxes	

☺ **HISTORICAL & BEAUTIFUL SCENERY**

Monument	Scenic	Historical significance
Beauty	The view of the Bluff	View in West Gering
Pretty valley	Nice view	Old West history & celebration

Appendix E

**Categories Generated from Things that Respondents like LEAST
About Living in Gering**

Categories Generated from Things that Respondents like LEAST about Living in Gering

⊗ ENTERTAINMENT OPPORTUNITIES		
No choice of shopping	Very little shopping	No choice of restaurant
No restaurants	Travel services	No major department stores
No variety of stores	Distance from mall	All shopping centers are in Scottsbluff
⊗ COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT		
Lack of leash law enforcement	Quiet	Lighting of the town
Too many dead trees	High murder rate	Kids speeding
Noisy dogs	Isolation mentality	Dead trees
Walking dogs, cats	Too many run-down areas	Too many beer gardens
Main Street's appearance	Pet regulations	Car junkyards
Traffic	Drugs & alcohol	Isolated from State Capitol
The people don't like change	Local driving habits	Visual appearance
Too many campers on streets	Slum areas	Drug-related problems
Rundown appearance at almost every entrance	Open junkyards entering from East and North	Gering's low rent area in Terrytown
⊗ STREET MAINTENANCE		
Snow removal	Lighting downtown streets	7th Street needs surfaced
Streets	Upgrade of streets	Alleys need to be kept clean
Unpaved streets	Traffic light inadequate	No left turn lanes
Streets dip too much	Lack of traffic lights	Bad streets
Poor roads	No snow removal on side streets	Flooding along U Street after heavy rain
The rough corner of U Street & 10th	Need stoplight at U Street & Highway 71	

⊗ JOB OPPORTUNITIES		
Low pay scale	Low-paying jobs	No job market
Low salary scale	Not many white collar opportunities	Low-paying business & industry salaries
Young people have to leave because no job opportunities	Career opportunities for college graduates	
⊗ ADMINISTRATION		
City administration	Some district officials	Overspending
Local government	Law enforcement	Court system
How the City operates	No privilege to vote	The Mayor
Management of city funds	Court judge	Upper officials
Poor city management	City government	Election procedures
Too many Council persons	Mayor & Council decisions	Politics of City Government
Biased court system	Present City government	City coordination of property
Muckraking in local government	Inconsistency of City administration	Lack of consolidated services with Scottsbluff
No input welcomed by residents to City	Possible drug involvement of county officials	City administration not visible in community
Attitude of government officials	Unresponsive City management to ongoing problems	Lack of communication between City government & residents
⊗ COMMUNITY PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT		
Using U Street as a truck route	No recreation for youth	Nothing to do for youth
Not enough good rentals	They don't listen to the people	No positive support of teens
Not enough senior housing	Lack of building codes	Not enough for kids to do
Lack of future plans	Promotion of area	Codes not enforced
Non-progressive	Do not have voice at all	Social services inadequate
Winter youth activities	City's waste of local tax dollars	Busing out of home school area
They don't stand behind the old time ordinances	No food programs or tax breaks for handicapped people	People don't get to vote on important issues
Making the joint service with Scottsbluff	Not enough cultural events & opportunities	Range of low-priced rentals - quality
Services not bid - garbage collection price	Tearing down of historic buildings	Too many decisions made by Council; no chance to voice one's opinion

⊗ SANITATION

Condition of drinking water	Poor neighborhood sanitation	Schoolground garbage
Poor drainage	Junky yards	Litter on downtown sidewalk
Sewer services	The smell from feedlots	Waste plant smell
Weed control	Taste of water	Stinky drinking water
Weeds	Sewer smell from lagoon	No fluoride in water
Ugly, junky north 10th Street	Landfill - it is often a mess	Drinking water is not up to standards
No waste recycling facilities	Dogs disposing of their waste on yards	No storm sewers so dips in streets

⊗ CIVIC CENTER ISSUE

No vote on Civic Center	Wasted money on Civic Center	Do not have vote voice on all issues like Civic Center
No motels or restaurants near Civic Center	Building Civic Center at taxpayers' expense	Civic Center should have been voted on by citizens
People do not get to vote on important issues	Not allowing the people to vote on where their money should be spent	Taxpayers shafted when not given the chance to vote on Civic Center
Passive acceptance of decision not in the best interests of taxpayers		

⊗ RAILROAD

Railroad's excessive noise	Train crossings	Train whistles
Train noise	Trains blocking traffic	Waiting for trains and overpass between Gering & Scottsbluff
Trains are too long & take forever at crossings		

⊗ ECONOMIC PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

Lack of industry	No big discount stores	Not enough industry
Availability of major highways	Farm-based economy	Growth potential relatively low
Easy welfare state	No economic opportunity	No business downtown
Only one grocery store	More food establishments	More retail business
Inadequate highway	No competition for food stores	Not enough tourist attraction
Lack of motivation towards growth in our county	Low-paying business & industry	Dependence on agriculture for overall prosperity

Appendix E (continued)

Ⓔ PUBLIC SERVICES/FACILITIES		
Can't find info on special events	No waste recycling facilities	Range of low-priced rentals
Mail	Lack of outdoor recreation	No recreation for teenagers
High rates on cable TV	No transportation	Lack of outdoor recreation
Air service in & out	No recreation for youth	Lack of speed controlling around parks
Library smaller than Scottsbluff	Not enough good daycare facilities	Unnecessary City facilities (R park)
US Mail delivery lack of service	Not enough handicapped parking	Hard to get response for non emergency from Police
Ⓕ COST OF LIVING		
Cost of tree removal	High cost of natural gas	High garbage bill
High cost of schooling	High cost of goods	High utilities
Utility bills	High cost of water	High gasoline price
Higher prices for retail items than Scottsbluff		